

THE GIRL'S BOOK OF VERSE



COMPILED BY
Mary Gould Davis

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Davis
The girl's book of verse



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THE GIRL'S BOOK OF VERSE

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An Anthology Compiled By
MARY GOULD DAVIS



1952 REVISION

J. B. Lippincott Company
PHILADELPHIA AND NEW YORK

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Library of Congress catalog card number 52-7251

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Fourth Impression

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INTRODUCTION

To the revised edition of this familiar and well-loved volume, I am only too happy to contribute an introduction, superfluous though it be.

I came upon this book soon after its first publication, although I did not realize it at the time. Publication dates meant nothing to me then. I simply assumed it had always been around and that I had missed it, as I had missed so many others. The discovery came at an opportune moment, for I was working with out-of-school teen-age girls who were searching for just such fare,—unconsciously, of course, but truly, nonetheless. Here was the book for them, for each of them, for it was "*The Girl's Book*" rather than "*The Girls' Book*,"—a matter of importance, as the compiler had known it would be. This was none of your small, thin, beautifully printed, precious little samplings of *belles-lettres*, but sturdy and plump as an ordinary novel with pages of sizable, straightforward, unembarrassed-looking type that appeared to be easy-going. It was *obvious*, in the fine old Latin sense of the word, as poetry should be in childhood and youth—perhaps always.

"I don't like poetry," a young girl said to me once, aggressively and daringly, expecting a rebuff or at least an argument. But I disappointed her. "Don't you?" I rejoined mildly. "I know some people don't. What poems especially don't you like?" "Oh, all of them," she exclaimed, dismissing them airily. Then as I waited, she went on, "Well, there's *The Lady of the Lake*.—But

Introduction

that's different. That really was a grand story and good fun. And then *Evangeline*—but that was all right too. And *The Solitary Reaper*—you know," (apologetically) "I rather liked that: 'Behold her single in the field, yon solitary Highland Lass'—it has a nice sound. Yes, and *The Skylark* has too. Well, I don't know," she concluded lamely, eyeing me sternly the while for any evidence of enjoyment or satisfaction, but I was plainly interested, nothing more. "It's funny, but I can't think right now of any poem I dislike. But," with renewed aggression, "I just don't like poetry!"

For the girls who like poetry, this is a book they will revel in from 10 or even 8 to 18 or 80. For those who dislike poetry but surprisingly find themselves liking poems, here are poems they will read and remember, lines that they will take to on sight: "Not Cortez had such wealth as mine!"—Not that the selections are tailored to their specifications. There is no particular concession to youth here, no conscious effort to be winning, to meet unformed tastes and improve them, to explain or analyze or introduce. There is only constant evidence of a wise selection on the basis of personal liking and wide experience and the observance of a certain pattern of effortless continuity under broad subjects of common interest. That is all—so simple, so easy, and withal so persuasive that it sets every reader off, as I suspect Miss Davis intended it should, to compiling a similar anthology of her very own. Apparently she has continued the process herself, for this revised edition drops thirty-one poems and puts in their places sixty-five others, attestation both to the changing trends in reading and in writing and to the compiler's willingness to accept change. After all, anthologizing is a lifelong process—what is Life if not a

Introduction

constant search for values, a daily choosing and rejecting,
an attempt to exercise

"... the courage that gains
And the prudence that keeps what men strive for . . ." ?

Here are evidences of both those qualities, a reconciliation that seems ever harder to attain.

Amelia Munson

New York

January 1, 1952

AUTHOR'S FOREWORD TO THE FIRST EDITION

Because real lovers of poetry know that time and place are of little importance, the poems in this book are brought together with no sense of the period in which they were written. From "The Song of Solomon" to Hilda Conkling's "Hills" they are here because they are beautiful, with a beauty that neither years nor events can change. It is this aloofness, this independence of circumstance that gives poetry its great value. From childhood, almost from infancy, through womanhood we may carry it with us, turning to it constantly and finding in it always something to satisfy our need.

My own love for it dates back to a mother who read and repeated poetry to us children as naturally as she breathed; to early mornings when we younger ones cuddled into bed beside her and listened to "Kallunborg Church," always associated in our minds with the old folk-tale of "Rumpelstiltskin," or "The Skeleton in Armor"; to winter evenings around a blazing fire where we roasted apples hung on strings from the mantel above while she read to us from "The Lay of the Last Minstrel" or "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner." She knew Whittier, visited at his house as a schoolgirl and quoted him to us until the ideas and ideals of the Quaker poet became unconsciously a part of our philosophy. And how well I remember her enthusiasm over Kipling when his poems began to appear in the late 'eighties! Her quick

Author's Foreword to the First Edition

response to the strange rhythm, the surge and vigor of his verse brought us stumbling behind her, eager to see and hear all that she saw and heard in this new singer.

This response to poetry comes to different people differently, but if we live our lives without it we lose one of the good things that the world has to give.

This book is only a taste of that good thing. It is suggestive rather than complete, a stimulus to appetite rather than a satisfying meal. It was made in the hope that through it the modern girl would find a key to the treasures that the poets of today and yesterday are giving and have given us.

Mary Gould Davis

New York, April, 1922

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THE GIRL'S BOOK OF VERSE

THE LAKE ISLE OF INNISFREE

WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS

I will arise and go now, and go to Innisfree,
And a small cabin build there, of clay and wattles made;
Nine bean rows will I have there, a hive for the honey
bee,
And live alone in the bee-loud glade.

And I shall have some peace there, for peace comes
dropping slow,
Dropping from the veils of the morning to where the
cricket sings;
There midnight's all a-glimmer, and noon a purple glow,
And evening full of the linnet's wings.

I will arise and go now, for always night and day
I hear lake water lapping with low sounds by the shore;
While I stand on the roadway, or on the pavement grey,
I hear it in the deep heart's core.

THE PASSIONATE SHEPHERD TO HIS LOVE

CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE

Come live with me and be my Love,
And we will all the pleasures prove
That hills and valleys, dales and fields,
Woods, or steepy mountain yields.

The Passionate Shepherd to His Love

And we will sit upon the rocks,
Seeing the shepherds feed their flocks,
By shallow rivers to whose falls
Melodious birds sing madrigals.

And I will make thee beds of roses
And a thousand fragrant posies,
A cap of flowers, and a kirtle
Embroidered all with leaves of myrtle;

A gown made of the finest wool
Which from our pretty lambs we pull;
Fair-linèd slippers for the cold,
With buckles of the purest gold.

A belt of straw and ivy-buds,
With coral clasps and amber studs:
And if these pleasures may thee move,
Come live with me, and be my Love.

The shepherd swains shall dance and sing
For thy delight each May morning:
If these delights thy mind may move,
Then live with me and be my Love.

MARGARITAE SORORI

WILLIAM ERNEST HENLEY

A late lark twitters from the quiet skies:
And from the west,
Where the sun, his day's work ended,
Lingers as in content,

There falls on the old, grey city
An influence luminous and serene,
A shining peace.

The smoke ascends
In a rosy-and-golden haze. The spires
Shine, and are changed. In the valley
Shadows rise. The lark sings on. The sun
Closing his benediction,
Sinks, and the darkening air
Thrills with a sense of the triumphing night—
Night with her train of stars
And her great gift of sleep.

So be my passing!
My task accomplished and the long day done,
My wages taken, and in my heart
Some late lark singing,
Let me be gathered to the quiet west,
The sundown splendid and serene,
Death.

THE LOVE SONG OF HAR DYAL

RUDYARD KIPLING

Alone upon the housetops to the North
I turn and watch the lightning in the sky—
The glamour of thy footsteps in the North.
Come back to me, Beloved, or I die.

The Love Song of Har Dyal

Below my feet the still bazaar is laid—
Far, far below the weary camels lie—
The camels and captives of thy raid.
Come back to me, Beloved, or I die.

My father's wife is old and harsh with years
And drudge of all my father's house am I—
My bread is sorrow and my drink is tears.
Come back to me, Beloved, or I die.

TIME, YOU OLD GIPSY MAN

RALPH HODGSON

Time, you old gipsy man,
Will you not stay,
Put up your caravan
Just for one day?

All things I'll give you
Will you be my guest,
Bells for your jennet
Of silver the best,
Goldsmiths shall beat you
A great golden ring
Peacocks shall bow to you,
Little boys sing,
Oh, and sweet girls will
Festoon you with may.
Time, you old gipsy,
Why hasten away?

Time, You Old Gipsy Man

Last week in Babylon,
Last night in Rome,
Morning, and in the crush
Under Paul's dome;
Under Paul's dial
You tighten your rein—
Only a moment,
And off once again;
Off to some city
Now blind in the womb,
Off to another
Ere that's in the tomb.

Time, you old gipsy man,
Will you not stay,
Put up your caravan
Just for one day?

THERE SITS A BIRD

CHARLES KINGSLEY

There sits a bird on every tree,
With a heigh-ho!
There sits a bird on every tree,
Sings to his love, as I sing to thee,
With a heigh-ho, and a heigh-ho!
Young maids must marry.

There grows a flower on every bough,
With a heigh-ho!
There grows a flower on every bough,

There Sits a Bird

Its gay leaves kiss—I'll show you how;
With a heigh-ho, and a heigh-ho!
Young maids must marry.

The sun's a bridegroom, earth a bride,
With a heigh-ho!
The sun's a bridegroom, earth a bride,
They court from morn to eventide:
The earth shall pass, but love abide.
With a heigh-ho, and a heigh-ho!
Young maids must marry.

HOPE IS THE THING WITH FEATHERS

EMILY DICKINSON

Hope is the thing with feathers
That perches in the soul,
And sings the tune without the words,
And never stops at all,

And sweetest in the gale is heard;
And sore must be the storm
That could abash the little bird
That kept so many warm.

I've heard it in the chillest land,
And on the strangest sea;
Yet, never, in extremity,
It asked a crumb of me.

ESCAPE

ELINOR WYLIE

When foxes eat the last gold grape,
And the last white antelope is killed,
I shall stop fighting and escape
Into a little house I'll build.

But first I'll shrink to fairy size,
With a whisper no one understands,
Making blind moons of all your eyes,
And muddy roads of all your hands.

And you may grope for me in vain
In hollows under the mangrove root,
Or where, in apple-scented rain,
The silver wasp-nests hang like fruit.

A MADRIGAL

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Crabbèd Age and Youth
Cannot live together:
Youth is full of pleasance,
Age is full of care;
Youth like summer morn,
Age like winter weather;
Youth like summer brave,
Age like winter bare.

A Madrigal

Youth is full of sport,
Age's breath is short;
Youth is nimble, Age is lame;
Youth is hot and bold,
Age is weak and cold;
Youth is wild and Age is tame.
Age, I do abhor thee,
Youth, I do adore thee;
O, my Love, my Love is young!
Age I do defy thee:
O sweet shepherd, hie thee!
For methinks thou stay'st too long.

ULLABY

WALTER DE LA MARE

Sleep, sleep, lovely white soul;
The little mouse cheeps plaintively,
The night-bird in the chestnut tree—
They sing together, bird and mouse,
In starlight, in darkness, lonely, sweet,
The wild notes and the faint notes meet—
Sleep, sleep, lovely white soul.

Sleep, sleep, lovely white soul;
Amid the lilies floats the moth,
The mole along his galleries goeth
In the dark earth; the summer moon
Looks like a shepherd through the pane
Seeking his feeble lamp again—
Sleep, sleep, lovely white soul.

Sleep, sleep, lovely white soul;
Time comes to keep night-watch with thee,
Nodding with roses; and the sea
Saith "Peace! Peace!" amid his foam.
"O be still!"
The wind cries up the whispering hill—
Sleep, sleep, lovely white soul.

THE SHEPHERD BOY SINGS

JOHN BUNYAN

Now as they were going along and talking, they espied a Boy feeding his Father's sheep. The Boy was in very mean Cloaths, but of a very fresh and well favored countenance, and as he sate by himself he sung. Hark, said Mr. Greatheart, to what the Shepherd's Boy saith. . . .

He that is down needs fear no Fall,
He that is low, no Pride;
He that is humble ever shall
Have God to be his Guide.

I am content with what I have,
Little be it or Much:
And, Lord, Contentment still I crave,
Because Thou savest Such.

Fullness to Such a Burden is
That go on Pilgrimage;
Here little, and hereafter Bliss
Is best from Age to Age.

A Song to David

A SONG TO DAVID

CHRISTOPHER SMART

He sang of God, the mighty source
Of all things, the stupendous force
On which all strength depends:
From Whose right arm, beneath Whose eyes,
All period, power, and enterprise
Commences, reigns, and ends.

The world, the clustering spheres He made
The glorious light, the soothing shade,
Dale, champaign, grove and hill:
The multitudinous abyss,
Where secrecy remains in bliss,
And wisdom hides her skill.

Tell them *I AM*, Jehovah said
To Moses; while Earth heard in dread,
And, smitten to the heart,
At once, above, beneath, around,
All Nature, without voice or sound,
Replied, "O Lord, THOU ART."

SLEEP

WILLIAM SHARP

While sways the restless sea
Beyond the shore,
And the waves sing listlessly
Their secret lore,
And the soft fragrant air
From off the deep
Scarce stirs thine outspread hair,—
 Sleep!

Far up in purple skies
Great lamps hang out,
White flames that fall and rise
In motley rout;
While fall their silvern rays
O'er crag and steep,
Woodlands and meadow-ways,—
 Sleep!

While the moon's amber gleams
Gild rock and flow'r,
Let no untimely dreams
Possess the hour;
Let no vague fears the heart
'Mid slumber keep,
In dreams love hath no smart,—
 Sleep!

To Sleep

TO SLEEP

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

A flock of sheep that leisurely pass by
One after one; the sound of rain, and bees
Murmuring; the fall of rivers, winds and seas,
Smooth fields, white sheets of water, and pure sky:

I've thought of all by turns, and yet do lie
Sleepless; and soon the small birds' melodies
Must hear, first uttered from my orchard trees,
And the first cuckoo's melancholy cry.

Even thus last night, and two nights more I lay,
And could not win thee, Sleep, by any stealth:
So do not let me wear tonight away:
Without thee what is all the morning's wealth?
Come, blessed barrier between day and day,
Dear mother of fresh thoughts and joyous health.

THE SONG OF SONGS

SOLOMON

I am the rose of Sharon,
And the lily of the valleys.
As the lily among thorns,
So is my love among the daughters.
As the apple tree among the trees of the wood,
So is my beloved among the sons.
I sat down under his shadow with great delight,

The Song of Songs

And his fruit was sweet to my taste.

He brought me to the banqueting house,
And his banner over me was love.

I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem,
By the roes, and by the hinds of the field,
That ye stir not up, nor awake my love, till he please.
The voice of my beloved!

Behold, he cometh leaping upon the mountains,
Skipping upon the hills.

My beloved is like a roe or a young hart;

Behold, he standeth behind our wall,
He looketh forth at the windows,
Shewing himself through the lattice.

My beloved spake,
And said unto me,
Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away.

For, lo, the winter is past,
The rain is over and gone.
The flowers appear on the earth,
The time of the singing of birds is come,
And the voice of the turtle is heard in our land;
The fig tree putteth forth her green figs,
And the vines with the tender grape
Give a good smell.
Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away.

My beloved is mine,
And I am his;
He feedeth among the lilies
Until the day break and the shadows flee away,
Turn, my beloved,
And be thou like a roe
Or a young hart upon the mountains of Bether.

MARY'S GIRLHOOD

DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI

This is that blessed Mary, pre-elect
God's Virgin. Gone is great while, and she
Dwelt young in Nazareth of Galilee.
Unto God's will she brought devout respect,
Profound simplicity of intellect,
And supreme patience. From her mother's knee
Faithful and hopeful; wise in charity;
Strong in grave peace; in pity circumspect.

So held she through her girlhood; as it were
An angel-watered lily, that near God
Grows and is quiet. Till, one dawn at home
She woke in her white bed, and had no fear
At all,—yet wept till sunshine, and felt awed;
Because the fulness of the time had come.

These are the symbols. On the cloth of red
I' the centre is the tripoint; perfect each,
Except the second of its points, to teach
That Christ is not yet born. The books—whose head
Is golden Charity, as Paul hath said—
Those virtues are wherein the soul is rich;
Therefore on them the lily standeth, which
Is Innocence, being interpreted.
The seven-thorned brier and the palm seven-leaved
Are her great sorrow and her great reward.
Until the end be full, the Holy One
Abides without. She soon shall have achieved
Her perfect purity; yea, God the Lord
Shall soon vouchsafe His Son to be her Son.

Address of Ruth to Naomi

ADDRESS OF RUTH TO NAOMI

(*Book of Ruth, Ch. I, 16-17*)*

And Ruth said:

“Intreat me not to leave thee,
Or to return from following after thee:
For whither thou goest, I will go,
And where thou lodgest, I will lodge.
Thy people shall be my people,
And thy God my God.
Where thou diest, will I die,
And there will I be buried.
The Lord do so to me, and more also,
If ought but death part thee and me.”

THE SHEPHERDESS

ALICE MEYNELL

She walks—the lady of my delight—
A shepherdess of sheep.
Her flocks are thoughts. She keeps them white;
She guards them from the steep;
She feeds them on the fragrant height,
And folds them in for sleep.

She roams maternal hills and bright,
Dark valleys safe and deep.

* From *The Bible Designed To Be Read As Living Literature* ed. by Ernest Sutherland Bates.

The Shepherdess

Into that tender breast at night
The chapest stars may peep.
She walks—the lady of my delight—
A shepherdess of sheep.

She holds her little thoughts in sight,
Though gay they run and leap.
She is so circumspect and right;
She has her soul to keep.
She walks—the lady of my delight—
A shepherdess of sheep.

ULLABY

SEUMAS O'SULLIVAN

Husheen, the herons are crying
Away in the rain and the sleet,
Flying and flying and flying,
With never a rest for their feet.

But warm in your coverlid nestle,
Wee Bird, till the dawn of the day,
Nor dream of the wild wings that wrestle
In the night and the rain and the grey.

Come, sweetheart, the bright ones would bring you
By the magical meadows and streams,
With the light of your dreaming they build you
A house on the hill of your dreams.

But you stir in your sleep and you murmur,
As though the wild rain and the grey

Wet hills, with the wind ever blowing
Had driven your dreams away.

And dearer the wind in its crying,
And the secrets the wet hills hold,
Than the goldenest place they could find you
In the heart of a country of gold.

THE FALCONER OF GOD

WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

I flung my soul to the air like a falcon flying.
I said, "Wait on, wait on, while I ride below!
 I shall start a heron soon
 In the marsh beneath the moon—
A strange white heron rising with silver on its wings,
 Rising and crying
 Wordless, wondrous things;
The secret of the stars, of the world's heart-strings
 The answer to their woe.
Then stoop thou upon him, and grip and hold him
 so!"

My wild soul waited on as falcons hover.
I beat the reedy fens as I trampled past.
 I heard the mournful loon
 In the marsh beneath the moon.
And then—with feathery thunder—the bird of my
 desire
 Broke from the cover
 Flashing silver fire.
High up among the stars I saw his pinions spire.

The Falconer of God

The pale clouds gazed aghast
As my falcon stoopt upon him, and gript and held him
fast.

My soul dropt through the air—With heavenly
plunder?—

Gripping the dazzling bird my dreaming knew?

Nay! but a piteous freight,
A dark and heavy weight

Despoiled of silver plumage, its voice forever
stilled—

All of the wonder

Gone that ever filled

Its guise with glory. O bird that I have killed,
How brilliantly you flew

Across my rapturous vision when first I dreamed of
you!

Yet I fling my soul on high with new endeavor,
And I ride the world below with a joyful mind.

I shall start a heron soon

In the marsh beneath the moon—

A wondrous silver heron its inner darkness fedges!

I beat forever

The fens and the sedges.

The pledge is still the same—for all disastrous
pledges,

All hopes resigned!

My soul still flies above me for the quarry it shall
find!

ODE

ARTHUR WILLIAM O'SHAUGHNESSY

We are the music-makers,
And we are the dreamers of dreams,
Wandering by lone sea-breakers,
And sitting by desolate streams;
World-losers and world-forsakers,
On whom the pale moon gleams:
Yet we are the movers and shakers
Of the world forever, it seems.

With wonderful deathless ditties
We build up the world's great cities,
And out of a fabulous story
We fashion an empire's glory:
One man with a dream, at pleasure,
Shall go forth and conquer a crown;
And three with a new song's measure
Can trample an empire down.

We, in the ages lying
In the buried past of the earth,
Built Nineveh with our sighing,
And Babel itself with our mirth;
And o'erthrew them with prophesying
To the old of the new world's worth;
For each age is a dream that is dying,
Or one that is coming to birth.

THE NUT-TREE

ANONYMOUS

I had a little nut-tree,
Nothing would it bear,
But a silver nutmeg,
And a golden pear.
The King of Spain's daughter
Came to visit me,
And all was because of
My little nut-tree.
I skipped over water
I danced over sea,
And all the birds in the air
Could not catch me.

THE POET'S SONG

ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON

The rain had fallen, the Poet arose,
He passed by the town and out of the street;
A light wind blew from the gates of the sun,
And waves of shadow went over the wheat;
And he sat him down in a lonely place,
And chanted a melody loud and sweet,
That made the wild swan pause in her cloud,
And the lark drop down at his feet.

The swallow stopped as he hunted the fly,
The snake slipped under a spray,
The wild hawk stood with the down on his beak,
And stared, with his foot on his prey;
And the nightingale thought, "I have sung many songs,
But never a one so gay,
For he sings of what the world will be
When the years have died away."

BEDOUIN SONG

BAYARD TAYLOR

From the desert I come to thee
On a stallion shod with fire;
And the winds are left behind
In the speed of my desire.
Under thy window I stand,
And the midnight hears my cry;
I love thee, I love but thee,
With a love that shall not die
Till the sun grows cold,
And the stars are old,
And the leaves of the Judgment Book unfold.

Look from thy window and see
My passion and my pain;
I lie on the sands below,
And I faint in thy disdain.
Let the night-winds touch thy brow

Bedouin Song

With the heat of my burning sigh,
And melt thee to hear the vow
Of a love that shall not die
Till the sun grows cold,
And the stars are old,
And the leaves of the Judgment Book unfold.

My steps are nightly driven
By the fever in my breast,
To hear from thy lattice breathed
The word that shall give me rest.
Open the door of thy heart,
And open thy chamber door,
And my kisses shall teach thy lips
The love that shall fade no more
Till the sun grows cold,
And the stars are old,
And the leaves of the Judgment Book unfold.

EVENING

EMILY DICKINSON

The Cricket sang,
And set the sun,
And workmen finished, one by one,
Their seam the day upon.

The low grass loaded with the dew,
The twilight stood as strangers do
With hat in hand, polite and new,
To stay as if, or go.

A vastness, as a neighbor, came—
A wisdom without face or name,
A peace, as hemispheres at home—
And so the night became.

ODE TO A NIGHTINGALE

JOHN KEATS

My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains
My senses, as though of hemlock I had drunk,
Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains
One minute past, and Lethe-wards had sunk :
'Tis not through envy of thy happy lot,
But being too happy in thy happiness,
That thou, light-wingèd Dryad of the trees,
 In some melodious plot
Of beechen green, and shadows numberless,
Singest of summer in full-throated ease.

O, for a draught of vintage that hath been
Cool'd a long age in the deep-delvèd earth,
Tasting of Flora and the country-green,
Dance, and Provençal song, and sunburnt mirth !
O, for a beaker full of the warm South !
Full of the true, the blushing Hippocrene,
With beaded bubbles winking at the brim,
 And purple-stainèd mouth ;
That I might drink, and leave the world unseen,
And with thee fade into the forest dim :

Ode to a Nightingale

Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget
What thou among the leaves hast never known,
The weariness, the fever, and the fret,
Here, where men sit and hear each other groan;
Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last grey hairs,
Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin, and dies;
Where but to think is to be full of sorrow
 And leaden-eyed despairs;
Where Beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes,
Or new Love pine at them beyond tomorrow.

Away! away! for I will fly to thee,
Not charioted by Bacchus and his pards,
But on the viewless wings of Poesy,
Though the dull brain perplexes and retards:
Already with thee! tender is the night,
And haply the Queen-Moon is on her throne,
Cluster'd around by all her starry Fays;
 But here there is no light,
Save what from heaven is with the breezes blown
Through verdurous glooms and winding mossy ways.

I cannot see what flowers are at my feet,
Nor what soft incense hangs upon the boughs,
But in embalmèd darkness, guess each sweet
Wherewith the seasonable month endows
The grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree wild;
White hawthorn and the pastoral eglantine;
Fast-fading violets cover'd up in leaves;
 And mid-May's eldest child,
The coming musk-rose, full of dewy wine,
The murmurous haunt of flies on summer eves.

Ode to a Nightingale

Darkling I listen; and, for many a time
I have been half in love with easeful Death,
Call'd him soft names in many a musèd rhyme,
To take into the air my quiet breath;
Now more than ever seems it rich to die,
To cease upon the midnight with no pain,
While thou art pouring forth thy soul abroad

In such an ecstasy!

Still wouldest thou sing, and I have ears in vain—
To thy high requiem become a sod.

Thou wast not born for death, immortal Bird!
No hungry generations tread thee down;
The voice I hear this passing night was heard
In ancient days by emperor and clown;
Perhaps the self-same song that found a path
Through the sad heart of Ruth, when, sick for home,
She stood in tears amid the alien corn;

The same that oft-times hath
Charmed magic casements, opening on the foam
Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn.

Forlorn! the very word is like a bell
To toll me back from thee to my sole self!
Adieu! the fancy cannot cheat so well
As she is famed to do, deceiving elf.
Adieu! Adieu! thy plaintive anthem fades
Past the near meadows, over the still stream,
Up the hill-side; and now 'tis buried deep

In the next valley-glades:
Was it a vision, or a waking dream?
Fled is that music:—Do I wake or sleep?

Pandora's Song

PANDORA'S SONG
(From "The Fire-Bringer")

WILLIAM VAUGHAN MOODY

I

I stood within the heart of God;
It seemed a place that I had known;
(I was blood-sister to the clod,
Blood-brother to the stone.)

I found my love and labor there,
My house, my raiment, meat and wine,
My ancient rage, my old despair,
Yea, all things that were mine.

I saw the spring and summer pass,
The trees grow bare, and winter come;
All was the same as once it was
Upon my hills at home.

Then suddenly in my own heart
I felt God walk and gaze about;
He spoke; His words seemed held apart
With gladness and with doubt.

"Here is my meat and wine," He said
"My love, my toil, my ancient care;
Here is my cloak, my book, my bed,
And here my old despair.

Pandora's Song

“Here are my seasons; winter, spring
Summer the same, and autumn spills
The fruits I look for; everything
As on my heavenly hills.”

II

Of wounds and sore defeat
I made my battle stay
Winged sandals for my feet
I wove of my delay.
Of weariness and fear
I made my shouting spear;
Of loss and doubt, and dread,
And swift oncoming doom
I made a helmet for my head
And a floating plume.
From the shutting mist of death,
From the failure of the breath
I made a battle horn to blow
Across the vales of overthrow.
O hearken, love, the battle horn!
The triumph clear, the silver scorn!
Oh hearken when the echoes bring
Down the grey disastrous morn
Laughter and rallying!

III

Along the earth and up the sky
The Fowler spreads his net:
O soul, what pinions wild and shy
Are on thy shoulders set?

Pandora's Song

What wings of longing undeterred
Are native to thee, spirit bird?
What sky is thine behind the sky,
For refuge and for ecstasy?
Of all thy heaven of clear delight
Why is each heaven twain,
O soul! that when the lure is cast
Before thy heedless flight,
And thou art snared and taken fast
Within one sky of light,
Behold, the net is empty, the cast is vain,
And from thy circling in the other sky the lyric
 laughters rain!

PRELUDE

T. S. ELIOT

The winter evening settles down
With smells of steaks in passageways.
Six o'clock.
The burnt-out end of smoky days.
And now a gusty shower wraps
The grimy scraps
Of withered leaves about your feet
And newspapers from vacant lots;
The showers beat
On broken blinds and chimney-pots,
And at the corner of the street
A lonely cab-horse steams and stamps.
And then the lighting of the lamps.

SHE WALKS IN BEAUTY

LORD BYRON

She walks in beauty, like the night
Of cloudless climes and starry skies;
And all that's best of dark and bright
Meet in her aspect and her eyes;
This mellow'd to that tender light
Which heaven to gaudy day denies.

One shade the more, one ray the less,
Had half impair'd the nameless grace
Which waves in every raven tress
Or softly lightens o'er her face;
Where thoughts serenely sweet express
How pure, how dear her dwelling-place.

And on that cheek, and o'er that brow,
So soft, so calm, yet eloquent,
The smiles that win, the tints that glow,
But tell of days in goodness spent,
A mind at peace with all below,
A heart whose love is innocent!

Piping Down the Valleys Wild

PIPING DOWN THE VALLEYS WILD

WILLIAM BLAKE

Piping down the valleys wild,
Piping songs of pleasant glee,
On a cloud I saw a child,
And he, laughing, said to me:

“Pipe a song about a lamb,”
So I piped with merry cheer.
“Piper, pipe that song again.”
So I piped; he wept to hear.

“Drop thy pipe, thy happy pipe,
Sing thy songs of happy cheer!”
So I sung the song again,
While he wept with joy to hear.

“Piper, sit thee down and write,
In a book that all may read.”
So he vanished from my sight,
And I plucked a hollow reed,

And I made a rural pen,
And I stained the water clear
And I wrote my happy songs
Every child may joy to hear.

THE SOLITARY REAPER

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

Behold her, single in the field,
Yon solitary Highland lass !
Reaping and singing by herself ;
Stop here, or gently pass !
Alone she cuts and binds the grain,
And sings a melancholy strain ;
O listen ! for the Vale profound
Is overflowing with the sound.

No nightingale did ever chaunt
More welcome notes to weary bands
Of travellers in some shady haunt,
Among Arabian sands ;
A voice so thrilling ne'er was heard,
In spring-time from the cuckoo-bird,
Breaking the silence of the seas
Among the farthest Hebrides.

Will no one tell me what she sings ?—
Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow
For old, unhappy, far-off things
And battles long ago ;
Or is it some more humble lay,
Familiar matter of today ?
Some natural sorrow, loss, or pain,
That has been, and may be again ?

Whate'er the theme, the Maiden sang
As if her song could have no ending ;
I saw her singing at her work,

The Solitary Reaper

And o'er the sickle bending;
I listened, motionless and still;
And, as I mounted up the hill,
The music in my heart I bore,
Long after it was heard no more.

OH, WERT THOU IN THE CAULD
BLAST

ROBERT BURNS

Oh, wert thou in the cauld blast
On yonder lea, on yonder lea,
My plaidie to the angry airt,
I'd shelter thee, I'd shelter thee;
Or did misfortune's bitter storms
Around thee blaw, around thee blaw,
Thy bield should be my bosom,
To share it a', to share it a'.

Or were I in the wildest waste,
Sae black and bare, sae black and bare,
The desert were a Paradise,
If thou wert there, if thou wert there;
Or were I monarch o' the globe,
Wi' thee to reign, wi' thee to reign,
The brightest jewell in my crown
Wad be my queen, wad be my queen.

THE LONG VOYAGE

MALCOLM COWLEY

Not that the pines were darker there,
nor mid-May dogwood brighter there,
nor swifts more swift in summer air;
it was my own country,

having its thunder-clap of spring,
its long midsummer ripening,
its corn hoar-stiff at harvesting,
almost like any country,

yet being mine; its face, its speech,
its hills bent low within my reach,
its river birch and upland beech
were mine, of my own country.

Now the dark waters at the bow
fold back, like earth against the plow;
foam brightens like the dogwood now
at home, in my own country.

THE OWL

ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON

When cats run home and light is come,
And dew is cold upon the ground,
And the far-off stream is dumb,

The Owl

And the whirring sail goes round,
And the whirring sail goes round;
Alone and warming his five wits,
The white owl in the belfry sits.

When merry milkmaids click the latch.
And rarely smells the new-mown hay,
And the cock hath sung beneath the thatch
Twice or thrice his roundelay,
Twice or thrice his roundelay;
Alone and warming his five wits,
The white owl in the belfry sits.

A SONNET

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

The world is too much with us; late and soon,
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers;
Little we see in Nature that is ours;
We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon!
The Sea that bares her bosom to the moon;
The winds that will be howling at all hours,
And are up-gathered now like sleeping flowers;
For this, for everything we are out of tune;
It moves us not.—Great God! I'd rather be
A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn;
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn;
Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea;
Or hear old Triton blow his wreathéd horn.

Ode on the Morning of Christ's Nativity

ODE ON THE MORNING OF CHRIST'S
NATIVITY

JOHN MILTON

This is the month, and this the happy morn
Wherein the Son of Heaven's Eternal King
Of wedded maid and virgin mother born,
Our great redemption from above did bring;
For so the holy sages once did sing
That He our deadly forfeit should release,
And with His Father work us a perpetual peace.

That glorious Form, the Light unsufferable,
And that far-beaming blaze of Majesty
Wherewith He wont at Heaven's high council-table
To sit the midst of Trinal Unity,
He laid aside; and, here with us to be,
Forsook the courts of everlasting day,
And chose with us a darksome house of mortal clay.

Say, heavenly Muse, shall not thy sacred vein
Afford a present to the Infant God?
Hast thou no verse, no hymn, or solemn strain
To welcome Him to this His new abode,
Now while the heaven, by the sun's team untrod,
Hath took no print of the approaching light,
And all the spangled host keep watch in squadrons
bright?

See how from far, upon the eastern road,
The star-led wizards haste with odours sweet;
O run, prevent them with thy humble ode

Ode on the Morning of Christ's Nativity

And lay it lowly at His blessed feet;
Have thou the honor first thy Lord to greet,
And join thy voice unto the angel quire
From out his secret altar touch'd with hallow'd fire.

A SONNET

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING

Go from me. Yet I feel that I shall stand
Henceforward in thy shadow. Nevermore
Alone upon the threshold of my door
Of individual life, I shall command
The uses of my soul, nor lift my hand
Serenely in the sunshine as before,
Without the sense of that which I forebore . . .
Thy touch upon my palm. The widest land
Doom takes to part us, leaves thy heart in mine
With pulses that beat double. What I do
And what I dream include thee, as the wine
Must taste of its own grapes. And when I sue
God for myself, He hears that name of thine,
And sees within my eyes, the tears of two.

TO A SKYLARK

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

Hail to thee, blithe Spirit!
 Bird thou never wert,
 That from Heaven, or near it,
 Pourest thy full heart
In profuse strains of unpremeditated art.

Higher still and higher
 From the earth thou springest
 Like a cloud of fire;
 The blue deep thou wingest,
And singing still dost soar, and soaring ever singest.

In the golden lightning
 Of the sunken sun,
 O'er which clouds are bright'ning,
 Thou dost float and run;
Like an unbodied joy whose race is just begun.

The pale purple even
 Melts around thy flight;
 Like a star of Heaven
 In the broad daylight
Thou art unseen, but yet I hear thy shrill delight.

Keen as are the arrows
 Of that silver sphere,
 Whose intense lamp narrows
 In the white dawn clear,
Until we hardly see, we feel that it is there.

To a Skylark

All the earth and air
With thy voice is loud,
As, when night is bare,
From one lonely cloud
The moon rains out her beams, and Heaven is
overflowed.

What thou art we know not;
What is most like thee?
From rainbow clouds there flow not
Drops so bright to see,
As from thy presence showers a rain of melody.

Like a Poet hidden
In the light of thought,
Singing hymns unbidden
Till the world is wrought
To sympathy with hopes and fears it heeded not:

Like a high-born maiden
In a palace tower,
Soothing her love-laden
Soul in secret hour
With music sweet as love, which overflows her
bower:

Like a glowworm golden
In a dell of dew,
Scattering un beholding
Its aërial hue
Among the flowers and grass which screen it from
the view:

Like a rose enbowered
In its own green leaves,

By warm winds beflowered,
Till the scent it gives
Makes faint with too much sweet those heavy-wingèd thieves.

Sound of vernal showers
On the twinkling grass,
Rain-awakened flowers,
All that ever was
Joyous and clear and fresh, thy music doth surpass.

Teach us, Sprite or Bird,
What sweet thoughts are thine;
I have never heard
Praise of love or wine
That panted forth a flood of rapture so divine.

Chorus Hymeneal,
Or triumphal chant,
Matched with thine, would be all
But an empty vaunt,
A thing wherein we feel there is some hidden want.

What objects are the fountains
Of thy happy strain?
What fields or waves or mountains?
What shapes of sky or plain?
What love of thine own kind? what ignorance of
pain?

With thy clear keen joyance
Languor cannot be;
Shadow of annoyance
Never came near thee;
Thou lovest—but ne'er knew love's sad satiety.

To a Skylark

Waking or asleep
Thou of death must deem
Things more true and deep
Than we mortals dream—
Or how could thy notes flow in such a crystal
stream?

We look before and after,
And pine for what is not;
Our sincerest laughter
With some pain is fraught;
Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest
thought.

Yet if we could scorn
Hate and pride and fear;
If we were things born
Not to shed a tear,
I know not how thy joy we ever should come near.

Better than all measures
Of delightful sound,
Better than all treasures
That in books are found,
Thy skill to poet were, thou scorner of the ground!

Teach me half the gladness
That thy brain must know;
Such harmonious madness
From my lips would flow
The world should listen then—as I am listening now.

TRUE LOVE

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Let me not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments. Love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove:
O no! it is an ever-fixed mark,
That looks on tempests and is never shaken;
It is the star to every wandering bark,
Whose worth 's unknown, although his height be taken.
Love 's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickle's compass come;
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
But bears it out even to the edge of doom:—
If this be error, and upon me proved,
I never writ, nor no man ever loved.

TO THE EVENING STAR

WILLIAM BLAKE

Thou fair-haired Angel of the Evening,
Now, whilst the sun rests on the mountains, light
Thy bright torch of love; thy radiant crown
Put on, and smile upon our evening bed!
Smile on our loves; and while thou drawest the
Blue curtains of the sky, scatter thy silver dew
On every flower that shuts its sweet eyes
In timely sleep. Let thy West Wind sleep on

To the Evening Star

The lake; speak silence with thy glimmering eyes,
And wash the dusk with silver. Soon, full soon,
Dost thou withdraw; then the wolf rages wide,
And the lion glares through the dun forest:
The fleeces of the flock are covered with
Thy sacred dew; protect them with thine influence.

WHO WALKS WITH BEAUTY

DAVID MORTON

Who walks with beauty has no need of fear;
The sun and moon and stars keep pace with him;
Invisible hands restore the ruined year,
And time itself grows beautifully dim.
One hill will keep the footprints of the moon
That came and went a hushed and secret hour;
One star at dusk will yield the lasting boon;
Remembered beauty's white immortal flower.

Who takes of beauty wine and daily bread
Will know no lack when bitter years are lean;
The brimming cup is by, the feast is spread;
The sun and moon and stars his eyes have seen
Are for his hunger and the thirst he slakes;
The wine of beauty and the bread he breaks.

WIND SONG

CARL SANDBURG

Long ago I learned how to sleep,
In an old apple orchard where the wind swept by counting its money and throwing it away,
In a wind-gaunt orchard where the limbs forked out and listened or never listened at all,
In a passel of trees where the branches trapped the wind into whistling, "Who, who are you?"
I slept with my head in an elbow on a summer afternoon and there I took a sleep lesson.
There I went away saying: I know why they sleep, I know how they trap the tricky winds.
Long ago I learned how to listen to the singing wind and how to forget and how to hear the deep whine, Slapping and lapsing under the day blue and the night stars:

Who, who are you?
Who can ever forget
listening to the wind go by
counting its money
and throwing it away?

DOVER BEACH

MATTHEW ARNOLD

The sea is calm tonight.
The tide is full, the moon lies fair
Upon the straits; on the French coast the light
Gleams and is gone; the cliffs of England stand,

Dover Beach

Glimmering and vast, out in the tranquil bay.
Come to the window, sweet is the night-air!
Only, from the long line of spray
Where the sea meets the moon-blanch'd land,
Listen! you hear the grating roar
Of pebbles which the waves draw back, and fling
At their return, upon the high strand,
Begin, and cease, and then again begin,
With tremulous cadence slow, and bring
The eternal note of sadness in.

Sophocles long ago
Heard it on the *Ægean*, and it brought
Into his mind the turbid ebb and flow
Of human misery; we
Find also in the sound a thought,
Hearing it by this distant northern sea.
The Sea of Faith
Was once, too, at the full, and round earth's
shore
Lay like the folds of a bright girdle furl'd.
But now I only hear
Its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar,
Retreating, to the breath
Of the night-wind, down the vast edges drear
And naked shingles of the world.
Ah, love, let us be true
To one another! for the world, which seems
To lie before us like a land of dreams,
So various, so beautiful, so new,
Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain;
And we are here as on a darkling plain
Swept with confused alarms of struggle
and flight,
Where ignorant armies clash by night.

ON HIS BLINDNESS

JOHN MILTON

When I consider how my light is spent,
Ere half my days, in this dark world and wide,
And that one talent which is death to hide
Lodged with me useless, though my soul more bent
To serve therewith my Maker, and present
My true account, lest He returning chide—
Doth God exact day-labour, light denied?
I fondly ask; but Patience to prevent
That murmur, soon replies, God doth not need
Either man's work, or His own gifts; who best
Bear His mild yoke, they serve Him best: His state
Is kingly; thousands at His bidding speed
And post o'er land and ocean without rest:
They also serve who only stand and wait.

THE FIFTEEN ACRES

JAMES STEPHENS

I

I cling and swing
On a branch, or sing
Through the cool clear hush of morning O!

Or fling my wing
On the air, and bring
To sleepier birds a warning O!

BOOKMOBILE

The Fifteen Acres

That the night's in flight!
And the sun's in sight!
And the dew is the grass adorning O!

And the green leaves swing
As I sing, sing, sing:
Up by the river,
Down the dell,
To the little wee nest,
Where the big tree fell,
So early in the morning O!

II

I flit and twit
In the sun for a bit,
When his light so bright is shining O!

Or sit and fit
My plumes, or knit
Straw plaits for the nest's nice lining O!

And she, with glee,
Shows unto me,
Underneath her wing reclining O!

And I sing that Peg
Has an egg, egg, egg!
Up by the oat field,
Round the mill:
Past the meadow,
Down the hill;
So early in the morning O!

The Fifteen Acres

III

I stoop and swoop
On the air, or loop
Through the trees, and then go soaring O!

To group, with a troop,
On the skiey poop,
While the wind behind is roaring O!

I skim and swim
By a cloud's red rim;
And up to the azure flooring O!

And my wide wings drip,
As I slip, slip, slip,
Down through the rain drops,
Back where Peg
Broods in the nest
On the little white egg,
So early in the morning O!

“BE NOT AFRAID . . .”

ROBERT NATHAN

Be not afraid because the sun goes down;
It brings the sunset and the plover's cry.
Before the colors of the evening drown,
The stars will make new colors in the sky.
Night is no enemy. She passes by,
And shows us silence for our own heart's good;

“Be Not Afraid . . .”

For while we sleep, the roses multiply,
The little tree grows taller in the wood.

Fear not the night; the morning follows soon.
Each has his task to make the earth more fair.
It is by these, by midnight and by noon,
That she grows riper and her orchards bear.
Her fields would wither in a sun too bright;
They need the darkness, too. Fear not the night.

A SONG IN PRAISE OF THE LORD
OF HEAVEN AND EARTH

(An Ancient Spiritual Folk Song)

Sky so bright
Blue and light,
Stars how many hast thou?
Countless stars.

Countless times
Shall our God be praised now.

Forest green,
Cool, serene,
Leaves how many has thou?
Countless leaves.

Countless times
Shall our God be praised now.

Deepest sea,
Wide and free,
Waves how many hast thou?
Countless waves

Countless times
Shall our God be praised now.

A Song in Praise of the Lord of Heaven and Earth

Eternity,
Eternity,
Hours how many has thou?

Countless hours.

Countless times
Shall our God be praised now,
Shall our God be praised now.

Part Two

THE PIPES OF PAN



*When stars into the twilight steer,
Or thrushes build among the may,
Or wonder moves between the hills . . .*

John Drinkwater

SONG FROM PIPPA PASSES

ROBERT BROWNING

The year's at the spring,
And day's at the morn;
Morning's at seven;
The hill-side's dew-pearl'd,
The lark's on the wing;
The snail's on the thorn;
God's in His heaven—
All's right with the world!

THE ECHOING GREEN

WILLIAM BLAKE

The sun does arise,
And make happy the skies;
The merry bells ring
To welcome the Spring;
The skylark and the thrush,
The birds of the bush,
Sing louder around
To the bells cheerful sound,
While our sports shall be seen
On the Echoing Green.

The Echoing Green

Old John, with white hair,
Does laugh away care,
Sitting under the oak,
Among the old folk,
They laugh at our play,
And soon they all say:
"Such, such were the joys
When we all, girls and boys,
In our youth time were seen
On the Echoing Green."

Till the little ones, weary,
No more can be merry;
The sun does descend,
And our sports have an end.
Round the laps of their mothers
Many sisters and brothers,
Like birds in their nest,
Are ready for rest,
And sport no more seen
On the darkening Green.

A CHANTED CALENDAR

SYDNEY DOBELL

First came the primrose,
On the bank high,
Like a maiden looking forth
From the window of a tower
When the battle rolls below,
So look'd she,
And saw the storms go by.

Then came the wind-flower
In the valley left behind,
As a wounded maiden, pale
With purple streaks of woe,
When the battle has roll'd by
Wanders to and fro,
So totter'd she,
Dishevell'd in the wind.

Then came the daisies,
On the first of May,
Like a banner'd show's advance
While the crowd runs by the way,
With ten thousand flowers about them
 they came trooping
Through the fields.
As a happy people come,
So came they,
As a happy people come
When the war has roll'd away,
With dances and tabor, pipe and drum,
And all make holiday.

Then came the cowslip,
Like a dancer in the fair,
She spread her little mat of green,
And on it danced she,
With a fillet bound about her brow,
A fillet round her happy brow,
A golden fillet round her brow,
And rubies in her hair.

NATURE

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

I

Winters know
Easily to shed the snow,
And the untaught Spring is wise
In cowslips and anemones.
Nature, hating art and pains,
Baulks and baffles plotting brains;
Casualty and Surprise
Are the apples of her eyes;
But she dearly loves the poor,
And, by marvel of her own,
Strikes the loud pretender down.
For Nature listens in the rose,
And harkens in the berry's bell,
To help her friends, to plague her foes,
And like wise God she judges well.
Yet doth much her love excel
To the souls that never fell,
To swains that live in happiness,
And do well because they please,
Who walk in ways that are unfamed,
And feats achieve before they're named.

II

She is gamesome and good,
But of mutable mood,
No dreary repeater now and again,
She will be all things to men.

She who is old, but nowise feeble,
Pours her power into the people,
Merry and manifold without bar,
Makes and moulds them what they are,
And what they call their city way
Is not their way, but hers,
And what they say they made today
They learned of the oaks and firs.
She spawneth men as mallows fresh,
Hero and maiden, flesh of her flesh;
She drugs her water and her wheat
With the flavor she finds meet,
And gives them what to drink and eat;
And having thus their bread and growth,
They do her bidding, nothing loath.
What 's most theirs is not their own,
But borrowed in atoms from iron and stone,
And in their vaunted works of Art
The master-stroke is still her part.

AN APRIL MORNING

BLISS CARMAN

Once more in misted April
The world is growing green.
Along the winding river
The plumey willows lean.

Beyond the sweeping meadows
The looming mountains rise,
Like battlements of dreamland
Against the brooding skies.

An April Morning

In every wooded valley
The buds are breaking through,
As though the heart of all things
No languor ever knew.

The golden-wings and bluebirds
Call to their heavenly choirs.
The pines are blued and drifted
With smoke of brushwood fires.

And in my sister's garden
Where little breezes run,
The golden daffodillies
Are blowing in the sun.

SUMMER TIME ON BREDON

A. E. HOUSMAN

In summer time on Bredon
The bells they sound so clear;
Round both the shires they ring them
In steeples far and near,
A happy noise to hear.

Here of a Sunday morning
My love and I would lie,
And see the coloured counties,
And hear the larks so high
About us in the sky.

Summer Time on Bredon

The bells would ring to call her
 In valleys miles away:
“Come all to church, good people;
 Good people, come and pray.”
 But here my love would stay.

And I would turn and answer
 Among the springing thyme,
“Oh, peal upon our wedding,
 And we will hear the chime,
 And come to church in time.”

But when the snows at Christmas
 On Bredon top were strown,
My love rose up so early
 And stole out unbeknown
 And went to church alone.

They tolled the one bell only,
 Groom there was none to see.
The mourners followed after,
 And so to church went she,
 And would not wait for me.

The bells they sound on Bredon,
 And still the steeples hum.
“Come all to church, good people,”—
 Oh noisy bells, be dumb;
 I hear you, I will come.

Daffodils

DAFFODILS

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd—
A host of golden daffodils,
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle in the Milky Way,
They stretched in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay;
Ten thousand saw I, at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced, but they
Outdid the sparkling waves in glee;
A poet could not but be gay
In such a jocund company;
I gazed and gazed—but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought.

For oft, when on my couch I lie,
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude,
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

Under the Greenwood Tree

UNDER THE GREENWOOD TREE

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Under the greenwood tree
Who loves to lie with me,
And tune his merry note
Unto the sweet bird's throat,
Come hither, come hither, come hither;
Here shall he see
No enemy
But winter and rough weather.

Who doth ambition shun
And loves to live i' the sun,
Seeking the food he eats,
And pleased with what he gets,
Come hither, come hither, come hither;
Here shall he see
No enemy
But winter and rough weather.

PAN WITH US

ROBERT FROST

Pan came out of the woods one day,
His skin and his hair and his eyes were gray,
The gray of the moss of walls were they,
And stood in the sun and looked his fill
At wooded valley and wooded hill.

Pan With Us

He stood in the zephyr, pipes in hand,
On a height of naked pasture land;
In all the country he did command
 He saw no smoke and he saw no roof.
 That was well! and he stamped a hoof.

His heart knew peace, for none came here
To this lean feeding save once a year
Someone to salt the half-wild steer,
 Or homespun children with clicking pails
 Who see so little they tell no tales.

He tossed his pipes, too hard to teach
A new-world song, far out of reach,
For a sylvan sign that the blue jay's screech
 And the whimper of hawks beside the sun
 Were music enough for him, for one.

Times were changed from what they were:
Such pipes kept less of power to stir
The fruited boughs of the juniper
 And the fragile bluets clustered there
 Than the merest aimless breath of air.

They were pipes of pagan mirth,
And the world had found new terms of worth.
He laid him down on the sun-burned earth
 And unravelled a flower and looked away—
 Play? Play? What should he play?

A LITTLE GARDEN

AMY LOWELL

A little garden on a bleak hillside
Where deep the heavy, dazzling mountain snow
Lies far into the Spring. The sun's pale glow
Is scarcely able to make patches wide
About the single rosebush. All denied
Of Nature's tender ministries. But no,—
For wonder-working faith has made it blow
With flowers many hued and starry-eyed.
Here sleeps the sun long, idle summer hours;
Here butterflies and bees fare far to rove
Amid the crumpled leaves of poppy flowers;
Here four-o'clocks, to the passionate night above
Fling whiffs of perfume, like pale incense showers.
A little garden, loved with a great love!

MY GARDEN

THOMAS E. BROWN

A garden is a lovesome thing, God wot!
Rose plot,
Fringed pool,
Ferned grot—
The veriest school
Of Peace; and yet the fool
Contends that God is not—
Not God? In gardens? When the eve is cool?
Nay, but I have a sign;
'Tis very sure God walks in mine!

Old Gardener Time

OLD GARDENER TIME

RACHEL FIELD

Old Gardener Time is abroad tonight,
Shuffling through leaves that fell all day.
Out in the dark I can hear his broom
Secretly sweeping the gold and gay;
The pointed scarlet; the rusty brown
In piles that smolder, while crickets shrill,
And summer is only a faint, sweet thread
Of dusty smoke at the window sill.
Warm is my pillow and dreams beguile.
I lie secure in a quiet room,
But old Gardener Time is abroad tonight
In the frosty dark with his tireless broom.

MY MASTER HATH A GARDEN

ANONYMOUS

My master hath a garden, full-filled with
divers flowers,
Where thou mayest gather posies gay, all
times and hours,
 Here naught is heard
 But paradise-bird,
 Harp, dulcimer and lute,
 With cymbal
 And timbrel,
 And the gentle sounding flute.

My Master Hath a Garden

Oh! Jesus, Lord, my heal and weal, my
bliss complete,
Make thou my heart thy garden-plot, true,
fair and neat
That I may hear
This music clear,
Harp, dulcimer and lute,
With cymbal,
And timbrel
And the gentle sounding flute.

KINGCUPS

ELEANOR FARJEON

When Spring revives in Arun's veins,
And she grows restless day by day
With rushing storms of silver rains
And speedy tides a league away,
And smells beneath her waving trees
The salt adventure of the seas:

Beneath her level banks she brims,
And all the meadow overwhelms
Till solid earth in ocean swims,
And huddled cows beneath the elms
Keep to their trodden path of mud
And watch their pastures under flood.

But when my lovely country lies
Drowned in high waters and sweet scents,
Above the floods the kingcups rise
In golden isles and continents,

Kingcups

Like an imagined world that leaps
To sight on momentary deeps.

Then through those deeps of blue and steel,
Where grasses like Pacific weeds
Hide many an ancient hulk and keel
Of ships unhistoried with their deeds,
And tiny flowers submerged lie plain
Like sunken wonders of the main :

A giant adventurer I wade
To conquest of the golden lands
Knee-deep in ocean unafraid,
Amassing treasure with my hands,
Watched by astonished red-eyed cows
Banished from worlds they used to browse.

Not Cortez had such wealth as mine
When on the fabulous floods for miles
The kingcups make the daylight shine
With golden continents and isles,
And Spring outpours through Arun's streams
Her deluge of remembered dreams.

TO DAFFODILS

ROBERT HERRICK

Fair daffodils, we weep to see
You haste away so soon;
As yet the early-rising sun
Has not attained his noon.
Stay, stay,

To Daffodils

Until the hastening day
Has run
But to the evensong;
And, having pray'd together, we
Will go with you along.

We have short time to stay, as you,
We have as short a spring;
As quick a growth to meet decay,
As you, or anything.
We die
As your hours do, and dry
Away
Like to the summer's rain;
Or as the pearls of morning's dew
Ne'er to be found again.

I SAW IN LOUISIANA A LIVE-OAK
GROWING

WALT WHITMAN

I saw in Louisiana a live-oak growing,
All alone stood it and the moss hung down from the
branches,
Without any companion it grew there uttering joyous
leaves of dark green,
And its look, rude, unbending, lusty, made me think of
myself,
But I wonder'd how it could utter joyous leaves standing
alone there without its friend near, for I knew I
could not,

I Saw in Louisiana a Live-Oak Growing

And I broke off a twig with a certain number of leaves
upon it, and twined around it a little moss,
And brought it away, and I have placed it in sight in my
room,
It is not needed to remind me as of my own dear friends
(For I believe lately I think of little else than of them),
Yet it remains to me a curious token, it makes me think
of manly love;
For all that, and though the live-oak glistens there in
Louisiana solitary in a wide flat space,
Uttering joyous leaves all its life without a friend a
lover near,
I know very well I could not.

A CATCH FOR SPRING

ROBERT NICHOLS

Now has the blue-eyed Spring
Sped dancing through the plain.
Girls weave a daisy chain;
Boys race beside the sedge;
Dust fills the blinding lane;
May lies upon the hedge;
All creatures love the Spring!

The clouds laugh on, and would
Dance with us if they could;
The larks ascend and shrill;
A woodpecker fills the wood;
Jays laugh crossing the hill;
All creatures love the Spring!

A Catch for Spring

The lithe cloud-shadows chase
Over the whole earth's face,
And where winds ruffling veer
O'er wooded streams' dark ways
Mad fish unscudding steer;
All creatures love the Spring!

Run, girls, to drink thick cream!
Race, boys, to where the stream
Winds through a rumbling pool,
And your bright bodies fling
Into the foaming cool!
For we'll enjoy our Spring!

PRAISE OF CREATED THINGS

SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI

Be Thou praised, my Lord, with all Thy creatures,
Above all, Brother Sun, who gives the day and lightens
us therewith.
And he is beautiful and radiant with great splendor,
of Thee, Most High, he bears similitude.

Be Thou praised, my Lord, of Sister Moon and the
stars,
In the heaven hast Thou formed them,
Clear and precious and comely.

Be Thou praised, my Lord, of Brother Wind,
And of the air and the cloud and of fair and all weather,
By which Thou givest Thy creatures sustenance.

Praise of Created Things

Be Thou praised, my Lord, of Sister Water,
Which is much useful and humble and precious and pure.
Be Thou praised, my Lord, of Brother Fire,
By which thou has lightened the night,
And he is beautiful and joyful and robust and strong.

Be Thou praised, my Lord, of our Sister Mother Earth,
Which sustains and hath us in rule,
And produces divers fruits with colored flowers, and
herbs.

Be Thou praised, my Lord, of those who pardon for
Thy love
And endure sickness and tribulations.
Blessed are they who will endure it in peace
For by Thee, Most High, they shall be crowned.

Be Thou praised, my Lord, for our Sister Bodily Death
From Whom no living man may escape.
Woe to those who die in mortal sin.

Blessed are they who are found in Thy most holy will,
For the second death shall not work them ill.

Praise ye and bless my Lord and give Him thanks,
And serve Him with great humility.

AN AUTUMNAL EVENING

WILLIAM SHARP

Deep black against the dying glow
The tall elms stand; the rooks are still;
No windbreath makes the faintest thrill
Amongst the leaves; the fields below
Are vague and dim in twilight shades—
Only the bats wheel in their raids
On the grey flies, and silently
Great dusky moths go flitting by.

SUNRISE ON RYDAL WATER

JOHN DRINKWATER

Come down at dawn from windless hills
Into the valley of the lake,
Where yet a larger quiet fills
The hour, and mist and water make
With rocks and reeds and island boughs
One silence and one element,
Where wonder goes surely as once
It went
By Galilean prowls.

Moveless the water and the mist,
Moveless the secret air above,
Hushed, as upon some happy tryst
The poised expectancy of love;

Sunrise on Rydal Water

What spirit is it that adores
What mighty presence yet unseen?
What consummation works apace
Between
These rapt enchanted shores?

Never did virgin beauty wake
Devouter to the bridal feast
Than moves this hour upon the lake
In adoration to the east;
Here is the bride a god may know,
The primal will, the young consent,
Till surely upon the appointed mood
Intent

The god shall leap—and, Lo,

Over the lake's end strikes the sun,
White, flameless fire; some purity
Thrilling the mist, a splendour won
Out of the world's heart. Let there be
Thoughts, and atonements and desires,
Proud limbs, and undeliberate tongue,
Where now we move with mortal care
Among

Immortal dews and fires.

So the old mating goes apace,
Wind with the sea, and blood with thought,
Lover with lover; and the grace
Of understanding comes unsought
When stars into the twilight steer,
Or thrushes build among the may,
Or wonder moves between the hills,
And day

Comes up on Rydal Mere.

Lines from "The Everlasting Mercy"

LINES FROM "THE EVERLASTING MERCY"

JOHN MASEFIELD

By this the sun was all one glitter,
The little birds were all in twitter;
Out of a tuft a little lark
Went higher up than I could mark,
His little throat was all one thirst
To sing until his heart should burst,
To sing aloft in golden light
His song from blue air out of sight.
The mist drove by, and now the cows
Came plodding up to milking house.
Followed by Frank, the Callow's cowman,
Who whistled, "Adam was a ploughman."
There came such cawing from the rooks,
Such running chuck from little brooks,
One thought it March, just budding green,
With hedgerows full of celandine.
An otter 'out of stream and played,
Two hares came loping up and stayed;
Wide-eyed and tender-eared, but bold.
Sheep bleated up by Penny's fold.
I heard a partridge covey call,
The morning sun was bright on all.
Down the long slope the plough-team drove.
The tossing rooks arose and hove.
A stone struck on the 'share. A word
Came to the team. The red earth stirred.

Lines From "Snowbound"

LINES FROM "SNOWBOUND"

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

Unwarmed by any sunset light
The grey day darkened into night,
A night made hoary with the swarm
And whirlwind of the blinding storm,
As zigzag, wavering to and fro,
Crossed and recrossed the wingèd snow.
And ere the early bed-time came
The white drift piled the window frame,
And through the dark the clothes-line posts
Looked in like tall and sheeted ghosts.

So all night long the storm roared on;
The morning broke without a sun;
In tiny spherule traced with lines
Of Nature's geometric signs,
In starry flake, and pellicle,
All day the hoary meteor fell;
And, when the second morning shone,
We looked upon a world unknown,
On nothing we could call our own.
Around the glistening wonder bent
The blue walls of the firmament,
No clouds above, no earth below,—
A universe of sky and snow!

The old familiar sights of ours
Took marvellous shapes; strange domes and towers
Rose up where sty or corn-crib stood,
Or garden wall, or belt of wood;

Lines From "Snowbound"

A smooth white mound the brush pile showed,
A fenceless drift what once was road;
The bridle-post an old man sat
With loose-hung coat and high cocked hat;
The well-curb had a Chinese roof;
And even the long sweep, high aloof,
In its slant splendor, seemed to tell
Of Pisa's leaning miracle.

THE FEET OF THE YOUNG MEN

RUDYARD KIPLING

Now the Four-way Lodge is opened, now the Hunting winds are loose—
Now the Smokes of Spring go up to clear the brain;
Now the Young Men's hearts are troubled for the whisper of the Trues,
Now the Red Gods make their medicine again!
Who hath seen the beaver busied? Who hath watched
the black-tail mating?
Who hath lain alone to hear the wild-goose cry?
Who hath worked the chosen water where the ouananiche is waiting,
Or the sea-trout's jumping crazy for the fly?

*He must go—go—go away from here!
On the other side the world he's overdue.
'Send the road is clear before you when the old Spring
fret comes o'er you,
And the Red Gods call for you!*

The Feet of the Young Men

So for one the wet sail arching through the rainbow
 round the bow,
And for one the creak of snow-shoes on the crust;
And for one the lakeside lilies where the bull-moose
 waits the cow,
And for one the mule-train coughing in the dust.
Who hath smelt wood-smoke at twilight? Who hath
 heard the birch-log burning?
Who is quick to read the noises of the night?
Let him follow with the others, for the Young Men's
 feet are turning
To the camps of proved desire and known delight.

Let him go—go, etc.

Do you know the blackened timber—do you know the
 racing stream
With the raw, right-angled log-jam at the end;
And the bar of sun-warmed shingle where a man may
 bask and dream
To the click of shod canoe-poles round the bend?
It is there that we are going with our rods and reels and
 races,
To a silent, smokey Indian that we know—
To a couch of new-pulled hemlock, with the starlight on
 our faces,
For the Red Gods call us out and we must go!

They must go—go, etc.

Do you know the shallow Baltic where the seas are steep
 and short,
Where the bluff lea-boarded fishing-luggers ride?
Do you know the joy of threshing leagues to leeward of
 your port
On a coast you've lost the chart of overside?

The Feet of the Young Men

It is there that I am going, with an extra hand to bale
her—

Just one able 'long-shore loafer that I know.
He can take his chance of drowning, while I sail and sail
and sail her,
For the Red Gods call me out, and I must go!

He must go—go, etc.

Do you know the pile-built village where the sago-deal-
ers trade—

Do you know the reek of fish and wet bamboo?
Do you know the steaming stillness of the orchid-scented
glade

When the blazoned, bird-winged butterflies flap
through?

It is there that I am going, with my camphor, net, and
boxes,

To a gentle, yellow pirate that I know—
To my little wailing lemurs, to my palms and flying-
foxes,

For the Red Gods call me out, and I must go.

He must go—go, etc.

Do you know the world's white roof-tree—do you know
that windy rift

Where the baffling mountain-eddies chop and change?

Do you know the long day's patience, belly-down on
frozen drift,

While the head of heads is feeding out of range?
It is there that I am going, where the boulders and the
snow lie,

With a trusty, nimble tracker that I know.
I have sworn an oath, to keep it on the horns of Ovis
Poli,

The Feet of the Young Men

And the Red Gods call me out and I must go.

He must go—go, etc.

Now the Four-way Lodge is opened—now the Smokes of Council rise—

Pleasant smokes, ere yet 'twixt trail and trail they choose—

Now the girths and ropes are tested; now they pack their last supplies;

Now our Young Men go to dance before the Trues!

Who shall meet them at those altars—who shall light them to that shrine?

Velvet-footed, who shall guide them to their goal?

Unto each the voice and vision; unto each his spoor and sign—

Lonely mountain in the Northland, misty sweat-bath 'neath the Line

And to each a man that knows his naked soul!

White or yellow, black or copper, he is waiting as a lover,

Smoke of funnel, dust of hooves, or beat of train—

Where the high grass hides the horseman or the glaring flats discover—

Where the steamer hails the landing, or the surf-boats bring the rover—

Where the rails run out in sand-drift. . . .

Quick! ah, heave the camp-kit over,

For the Red Gods make their medicine again!

And we go—go—go away from here!

On the other side of the world we're overdue!

'Send the road is clear before you when the old

Spring-fret comes o'er you,

And the Red Gods call for you!

A Vagabond Song

A VAGABOND SONG

BLISS CARMAN

There is something in the autumn that is native
to my blood

 Touch of manner, hint of mood;

 And my heart is like a rhyme,

With the yellow and the purple and the crimson
 keeping time.

The scarlet of the maples can shake me like a cry

 Of bugles going by,

 And my lonely spirit thrills

To see the frosty asters like a smoke upon the hills.

There is something in October sets the gypsy blood
 astir;

 We must rise and follow her,

 When from each hill of flame

She calls and calls each vagabond by name.

TEWKESBURY ROAD

JOHN MASEFIELD

It is good to be out on the road, and going one knows
 not where,

Going through meadow and village, one knows not
 whither or why;

Through the grey light drift of the dust, in the keen,
 cool rush of the air,

Tewkesbury Road

Under the flying white clouds, and the broad blue lift
of the sky.

And to halt at the chattering brook, in the tall green
fern at the brink,
Where the harebell grows, and the gorse, and the fox-
gloves purple and white;
Where the shy-eyed delicate deer troop down to the
brook to drink,
Where the stars are mellow and large at the coming
of the night.

O, to feel the beat of rain, and the homely smell of
the earth,
Is a tune for the blood to jig to, a joy past power of
words;
And the blessed green comely meadows are all a-ripple
with mirth
At the noise of the lambs at play and the dear wild cry
of the birds.

THE SEA GYPSY

RICHARD HOVEY

I am fevered with the sunset,
I am fretful with the bay,
For the wander-thirst is on me
And my soul is in Cathay.

There's a schooner in the offing,
With her top-sails shot with fire,

The Sea Gypsy

And my heart has gone aboard her
For the Islands of Desire.

I must forth again tomorrow!
With the sunset I must be,
Hull down on the trail of rapture
In the wonder of the Sea.

HILLS

HILDA CONKLING

The hills are going somewhere;
They have been on the way a long time.
They are like camels in a line
But they move more slowly.
Sometimes at sunset they carry silks,
But most of the time silver birch trees,
Heavy rocks, heavy trees, gold leaves
On heavy branches till they are aching. . . .
Birches like silver bars they can hardly lift
With grass so thick about their feet to hinder. . . .
They have not gone far
In the time I've watched them. . . .

SEA FEVER

JOHN MASEFIELD

I must go down to the seas again, to the lonely sea and
the sky,
And all I ask is a tall ship and a star to steer her by;
And the wheel's kick and the wind's song and the white
sail's shaking,
And a grey mist on the sea's face, and a grey dawn
breaking.

I must go down to the seas again, for the call of the
running tide
Is a wild call and a clear call that may not be denied;
And all I ask is a windy day with the white clouds flying,
And the flung spray and the blown spume, and the sea-
gulls crying.

I must go down to the seas again, to the vagrant gypsy
life,
To the gull's way and the whale's way where the wind's
like a whetted knife;
And all I ask is a merry yarn from a laughing fellow-
rover,
And quiet sleep and a sweet dream when the long trick's
over.

Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening

STOPPING BY WOODS ON A SNOWY EVENING

ROBERT FROST

W hose woods these are I think I know.
His house is in the village though;
He will not see me stopping here
To watch his woods fill up with snow.

My little horse must think it queer
To stop without a farmhouse near
Between the woods and frozen lake
The darkest evening of the year.

He gives his harness bells a shake
To ask if there is some mistake.
The only other sound's the sweep
Of easy winds and downy flake.

The woods are lovely, dark and deep.
But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep,
And miles to go before I sleep.

WINTER

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

W hen icicles hang by the wall
And Dick the shepherd blows his nail,
And Tom bears logs into the hall,
And milk comes frozen home in pail,

Winter

When blood is nipp'd, and ways be foul,
Then nightly sings the staring owl,
 To-whit!
 To-who! A merry note!
While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.

When all aloud the wind doth blow,
And coughing drowns the parson's saw,
And birds sit brooding in the snow,
 And Marian's nose looks red and raw,
When roasted crabs hiss in the bowl—
 Then nightly sings the staring owl,
 To-whit!
 To-who! A merry note!
While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.

Part Three

ENCHANTMENT



*A song of enchantment I sang me there
In the green, green woods by waters fair,
Just as the words came up to me,
I sang them under the wild-wood tree.*

Walter de la Mare

THE OTHERS

SEUMAS O'SULLIVAN

From our hidden places
By a secret path,
We troop in the moonlight
To the edge of the green rath.

There the night through
We take our pleasure,
Dancing to such a measure
As earth never knew.

To dance and lilt
And song without a name,
So sweetly chanted
'Twould put a bird to shame.

And many a young maiden
Is there of mortal birth
Her young eyes laden
With dreams of earth.

The Others

And many a youth entrancèd
Moves slow in the dreamy round,
His brave lost feet enchanted
In the rhythm of elfin sound.

Music so forest wild
And piercing sweet would bring
Silence on blackbirds singing
Their best in the ear of Spring.

And now they pause in their dancing
And look with troubled eyes,
Earth's straying children
With sudden memory wise.

They pause and their eyes in the moonlight
With faery wisdom cold,
Grow dim, and a thought goes fluttering
In hearts no longer old.

And then the dream forsakes them,
And singing they turn anew
As the whispering music takes them
To the dance of the elfin crew.

Oh, many a thrush and blackbird
Would fall to the dewy ground
And pine away in silence
For envy of such a sound.

So the night through
In our sad pleasure
We dance to many a measure
That earth never knew.

WILL EVER?

WALTER DE LA MARE

Will he ever be weary of wandering,
The flaming sun?
Ever weary of waning in lovelight,
The white, still moon?
Will ever a shepherd come
With a crook of simple gold,
And lead all the little stars
Like lambs to the fold?

Will ever the Wanderer sail
From over the sea,
Up the river of water,
To the stones to me?
Will he take us all into his ship,
Dreaming, and waft us far,
To where in the clouds of the West
The Islands are?

FAIRY LAND

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Over hill, over dale,
Through bush, through brier,
Over park, over pale,
Through flood, through fire,
I do wander everywhere,

Fairy Land

Swifter than the moon's sphere;
And I serve the fairy queen,
To dew her orbs upon the green;
The cowslips tall her pensioners be;
In their gold coats spots you see;
Those be rubies, fairy favours,
In those freckles live their savours;
I must go seek some dewdrops here,
And hang a pearl in every cowslip's ear.

THIS IS THE KEY

ANONYMOUS

This is the Key of the Kingdom:
In that Kingdom is a city;
In that city is a town;
In that town there is a street;
In that street there winds a lane;
In that lane there is a yard;
In that yard there is a house;
In that house there waits a room;
In that room an empty bed;
And on that bed a basket—
A Basket of Sweet Flowers:
 Of Flowers, of Flowers;
 A Basket of Sweet Flowers.

Flowers in a Basket;
Basket on the bed;
Bed in the chamber;

This Is the Key

Chamber in the house;
House in the weedy yard;
Yard in the winding lane;
Lane in the broad street;
Street in the high town;
Town in the city;
City in the Kingdom—
This is the Key of the Kingdom;
Of the Kingdom this is the Key.

FAERIES' SONG

WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS

The wind blows out of the gates of the day,
The wind blows over the lonely of heart,
And the lonely of heart is withered away,
While the faeries dance in a place apart,
Shaking their milk-white feet in a ring,
Tossing their milk-white arms in the air;
For they hear the wind laugh and murmur and sing
Of a land where even the old are fair,
And even the wise are merry of tongue;
But I heard a reed of Coolany say,
"When the wind has laughed and murmured and sung,
The lonely of heart is withered away."

Sir Roderic's Song

SIR RODERIC'S SONG

W. S. GILBERT

When the night wind howls in the chimney cowls, and
the bat in the moonlight flies,
And inky clouds, like funeral shrouds, sail over the mid-
night skies.

When the footpads quail at the night-birds wail, and
black dogs bay at the moon,

Then is the spectres' holiday, then is the ghosts' high-
noon!

As the sob of the breeze sweeps over the trees, and the
mists lie low on the fen,

From gray tomb-stones are gathered the bones that once
were women and men,

And away they go, with a mop and mow, to the revel
that ends too soon,

For cockcrow limits our holiday—the dead of the night's
high-noon!

And then each ghost with his lady-toast to their church-
yard beds takes flight,

With a kiss, perhaps, on her lantern chaps, and a grisly,
grim "good-night";

Till the welcome knell of the midnight bell rings forth
its jolliest tune,

And ushers in our next high holiday—the dead of the
night's high-noon!

THE MOCKING FAIRY

WALTER DE LA MARE

Won't you look out of your window, Mrs. Gill?"
Quoth the Fairy, nidding, nodding in the garden;
"Can't you look out of your window, Mrs. Gill?"
Quoth the Fairy, laughing softly in the garden;
But the air was still, the cherry boughs were still,
And the ivy-tod 'neath the empty sill,
And never from her window looked out Mrs. Gill
On the Fairy shrilly mocking in the garden.

"What have they done with you, you poor Mrs.
Gill?"

Quoth the Fairy, brightly glancing in the garden;
"Where have they hidden you, you poor old Mrs.
Gill?"

Quoth the Fairy dancing lightly in the garden;
But night's faint veil now wrapped the hill,
Stark 'neath the stars stood the dead-still Mill,
And out of her cold cottage never answered Mrs.
Gill

The Fairy mimbling mambling in the garden.

La Belle Dame Sans Merci

LA BELLE DAME SANS MERCI

JOHN KEATS

O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms,
Alone and palely loitering?
The sedge has wither'd from the lake,
And no birds sing.

O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms
So haggard and so woe-begone?
The squirrel's granery is full,
And the harvest's done.

I see a lily on thy brow
With anguish moist and fever dew,
And on thy cheek a fading rose
Fast withereth too.

I met a lady in the meads,
Full beautiful—a fairy's child,
Her hair was long, her foot was light,
And her eyes were wild.

I made a garland for her head,
And bracelets, too, and fragrant zone;
She look'd at me as she did love,
And made sweet moan.

I set her on my pacing steed,
And nothing else saw all day long,
For sidelong would she lean, and sing,
A fairy's song.

La Belle Dame Sans Merci

She found me roots of relish sweet,
And honey wild, and manna dew,
And sure in language strange she said—
“I love thee true.”

She took me to her elfin grot,
And there she wept and sigh'd full sore,
And there I shut her wild, wild eyes
With kisses four.

And there she lullèd me asleep,
And there I dream'd—ah, woe betide.
The latest dream I ever dream'd
On the cold hill's side.

I saw pale kings and princes too,
Pale warriors, death-pale were they all;
They cried—“*La Belle Dame sans Merci*
Hath thee in thrall!”

I saw their starved lips in the gloam
With horrid warning gapèd wide—
And I awoke, and found me here,
On the cold hill's side.

And this is why I sojourn here,
Alone and palely loitering,
Though the sedge is wither'd from the lake
And no birds sing.

The Neckan

THE NECKAN

MATTHEW ARNOLD

In summer, on the headlands,
The Baltic Sea along,
Sits Neckan with his harp of gold,
And sings his plaintive song.

Green rolls beneath the headlands,
Green rolls the Baltic Sea,
And there, below the Neckan's feet
His wife and children be.

He sings not of the ocean,
Its shells and roses pale,
Of earth, of earth the Neckan sings;
He hath no other tale.

He sits upon the headlands,
And sings a mournful stave
Of all he saw and felt on earth,
Far from the green sea wave.

Sings how, a knight, he wandered
By castle, field and town.
But earthly knights have harder hearts
Than the Sea Children own.

Sings of his earthly bridal,
Priests, knights and ladies gay.
“And who art thou,” the priest began,
“Sir Knight, who wedd’st today?”

"I am no knight," he answered;
"From the sea waves I come."
The knights drew swords, the ladies screamed,
The surpliced priest stood dumb.

He sings how from the chapel
He vanished with his bride,
And bore her down to the sea halls,
Beneath the salt sea tide.

He sings how she sits weeping
'Mid shells that round her lie.
"False Neckan shares my bed," she weeps;
"No Christian mate have I."

He sings how through the billows
He rose to earth again,
And sought a priest to sign the cross
That Neckan Heaven might gain.

He sings how, on an evening,
Beneath the birch trees cool,
He sate and played his harp of gold
Beside the river pool.

Beside the pool sate Neckan,
Tears filled his cold blue eye.
On his white mule, across the bridge,
A cassocked priest rode by.

"Why sitt'st thou there, O Neckan,
And play'st thy harp of gold?
Sooner shall this my staff bear leaves
Than thou shall Heaven behold."

The Neckan

The cassocked priest rode onwards,
And vanished with his mule.
And Neckan in the twilight gray
Wept by the river pool.

In summer, on the headlands,
The Baltic Sea along,
Sits Neckan with his harp of gold,
And sings his plaintive song.

THE HORNS OF ELFLAND

ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON

The splendor falls on castle walls
And snowy summits old in story;
The long light shakes across the lakes
And the wild cataract leaps in glory.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying!

O hark! O hear! how thin and clear,
And thinner, clearer, farther going!
O sweet and far from cliff and scar
The horns of Elfland faintly blowing!
Blow, let us hear the purple glens replying;
Blow, bugle, answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying!

O love, they die in yon rich sky,
They faint on hill or field or river;
Our echoes roll from soul to soul,
And grow for ever and for ever.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
And answer, echoes, answer, dying, dying, dying!

HALLOWE'EN

HARRY BEHN

Tonight is the night
When dead leaves fly
Like witches on switches
Across the sky,
When elf and sprite
Flit through the night
On a moony sheen.

Tonight is the night
When leaves make a sound
Like a gnome in his home
Under the ground,
When spooks and trolls
Creep out of holes
Mossy and green.

Tonight is the night
When pumpkins stare
Through sheaves and leaves
Everywhere,
When ghoul and ghost
And goblin host
Dance round their queen.
It's Hallowe'en.

ALULVAN

WALTER DE LA MARE

The sun is clear of bird and cloud,
The grass shines windless, grey and still,
In duskey ruin the owl dreams on,
The cuckoo echoes on the hill;
Yet soft along Alulvan walks
The ghost at noonday stalks.

His eyes in shadow of his hat
Stare on the ruins of his house;
His cloak, up-fastened with a brooch,
Of faded velvet, grey as mouse,
Brushed the roses as he goes:
Yet wavers not one rose.

The wild birds in a cloud fly up
From their sweet feeding in the fruit;
The droning of the bees and flies
Rises gradual as a lute;
Is it for fear the birds are flown,
And shrills the insect-drone?

Thick is the ivy o'er Alulvan,
And crisp with summer heat its turf;
For, far across its empty pastures
Alulvan's sands are white with surf:
And he himself is grey as the sea,
Watching beneath an elder tree.

All night the fretful, shrill Banshee
Lurks in the chambers' dark festoons,
Calling forever, o'er garden and river,

Through magpie changing of the moons:
“Alulvan, O, alas, ! Alulvan,
The doom of lone Alulvan !”

A MUSICAL INSTRUMENT

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING

What was he doing, the great god Pan,
Down in the reeds by the river ?
Spreading ruin and scattering ban,
Splashing and paddling with hoofs of a goat,
And breaking the golden lilies afloat
With the dragon-fly on the river.

He tore out a reed, the great god Pan,
From the deep cool bed of the river.
The limpid water turbidly ran,
And the broken lilies a-dying lay,
And the dragon-fly had fled away,
Ere he brought it out of the river.

High on the shore sate the great god Pan,
While turbidly flowed the river,
And hacked and hewed as a great god can
With his hard bleak steel at the patient reed,
Till there was not a sign of a leaf indeed
To prove it fresh from the river.

He cut it short did the great god Pan,
(How tall it stood in the river)
Then drew the pith like the heart of a man,
Steadily from the outside ring,

A Musical Instrument

Then notched the poor dry empty thing
In holes as he sate by the river.

“This is the way,” laughed the great god Pan,
(Laughed as he sate by the river)

“The only way since gods began
To make sweet music, they could succeed.”

Then dropping his mouth to a hole in the reed,
He blew in power by the river.

Sweet, sweet, sweet, O Pan,
Piercing sweet by the river.

Blinding sweet, O great god Pan.

The sun on the hill forgot to die,
And the lilies revived, and the dragon-fly
Came back to dream on the river.

Yet half a beast is the great god Pan
To laugh, as he sits by the river,
Making a poet out of a man.

The true gods sigh for the cost and the pain—
For the reed that grows never more again
As a reed with the reeds of the river.

THE FIELD MOUSE

WILLIAM SHARP

When the moon shines o'er the corn
And the beetle drones his horn,
And the flittermice swift fly,
And the nightjars swooping cry,
And the young hares run and leap,
We waken from our sleep.

And we climb with tiny feet
And we munch the green corn sweet
With startled eyes for fear
The white owl should fly near,
Or long slim weasel spring
Upon us where we swing.

We do no hurt at all;
Is there not room for all
Within the happy world?
All day we lie close curled
In drowsy sleep, nor rise
Till through the dusky skies
The moon shines o'er the corn
And the beetle drones his horn.

THE SANDS OF DEE

CHARLES KINGSLEY

The purple sands of Dee, on the north coast of Wales, at low tide stretch far into the sea and are said to be full of treacherous quicksands.

O Mary, go and call the cattle home,
And call the cattle home,
And call the cattle home,
Across the sands of Dee."

The western wind was wild and dank with foam
And all alone went she.

The western tide crept up along the sand,
And o'er and o'er the sand,
And round and round the sand,
As far as eye could see.

The Sands of Dee

The rolling mist came down and hid the land;
And never home came she.

Oh! is it weed, or fish, or floating hair—
A tress of golden hair,
A drownèd maiden's hair,
Above the nets at sea?

Was never salmon yet that shone so fair
Among the stakes of Dee.

They rowed her in across the rolling foam,
The cruel crawling foam,
The cruel hungry foam,
To her grave beside the sea.

But still the boatmen hear her call the cattle home,
Across the sands of Dee.

THE FAIRIES

WILLIAM ALLINGHAM

Up the airy mountain,
Down the rushy glen,
We daren't go a-hunting
For fear of little men;
Wee folk, good folk,
Trooping all together;
Green jacket, red cap
And white owl's feather.

Down along the rocky shore
Some make their home,
They live on crispy pancakes

The Fairies

Of yellow tide-foam;
Some in the reeds
Of the black mountain lake,
With frogs for their watch-dogs
All night awake.

High on the hill-top
The old King sits;
He is now so old and grey
He's nigh lost his wits.
With a bridge of white mist
Columbkill he crosses.
On his stately journeys
From Slieveleague to Rosses;
Or going up with music
On cold starry nights,
To sup with the Queen
Of the gay Northern Lights.

They stole little Bridget
For seven years long;
When she came down again
Her friends were all gone.
They took her lightly back
Between the night and morrow,
They thought that she was fast asleep
But she was dead with sorrow.
They have kept her ever since
Deep within the lake,
On a bed of flag-leaves,
Watching till she wake.

By the craggy hill-side,
Through the mosses bare,

The Fairies

They have planted thorn-trees
For pleasure here and there.
Is any man so daring
As dig them up in spite,
He shall find their sharpest thorns
In his bed at night.

Up the airy mountain,
Down the rushy glen,
We daren't go a-hunting
For fear of little men;
Wee folk, good folk,
Trooping all together;
Green jacket, red cap,
And white owl's feather.

LYDIA IS GONE THIS MANY A YEAR
LIZETTE WOODWORTH REESE

Lydia is gone this many a year,
Yet when the lilacs stir,
In the old gardens far or near,
This house is full of her.

They climb the twisted chamber stair;
Her picture haunts the room;
On the carved shelf beneath it there,
They heap the purple bloom.

A ghost so long has Lydia been,
Her cloak upon the wall,
Broidered, and gilt, and faded green,
Seems not her cloak at all.

Lydia Is Gone This Many a Year

The book, the box on the mantel laid,
The shells in a pale row,
Are those of some dim little maid,
A thousand years ago.

And yet the house is full of her,
She goes and comes again;
And longings thrill, and memories stir,
Like lilacs in the rain.

Out in their yards the neighbors walk,
Among the blossoms tall;
Of Anne, of Phyllis do they talk,
Of Lydia not at all.

Part Four

STORIES



*. . . . Cometh unto you with a tale
which holdeth children from play, and old
men from the chimney-corner.*

Sir Philip Sidney

MARTHA

WALTER DE LA MARE

Once . . . once upon a time . . .”
Over and over again,
Martha would tell us her stories,
In the hazel glen.

Hers were those clear grey eyes
You watch, and the story seems
Told by their beautifulness
Tranquil as dreams.

She would sit with her two slim hands
Clasped round her bended knees;
While we on our elbows lolled,
And stared at ease.

Her voice and her narrow chin,
Her grave small lovely head,
Seemed half the meaning
Of the words she said.

“Once . . . once upon a time . . .”
Like a dream you dream in the night,
Fairies and gnomes stole out
In the leaf-green light.

And her beauty far away
Would fade, as her voice ran on,
Till hazel and summer sun
And all were gone;—

All fordone and forgot;
And like clouds in the height of the sky,
Our hearts stood still in the hush
Of an age gone by.

THE LADY OF SHALOTT

ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON

I

On either side the river lie
Long fields of barley and of rye,
That clothe the wold and meet the sky;
And thro' the field the road runs by
To many tower'd Camelot;
And up and down the people go,
Gazing where the lilies blow
Round an island there below,
The island of Shalott.

Willows whiten, aspens quiver,
Little breezes dusk and shiver
Thro' the wave that runs forever
By the island in the river
Flowing down to Camelot.
Four grey walls, and four grey towers,

The Lady of Shalott

Overlook a space of flowers
And the silent isle embowers
The Lady of Shalott.

By the margin, willow-veil'd,
Slide the heavy barges trail'd
By slow horses; and unhail'd
The shallop flitteth silken-sail'd
Skimming down to Camelot;
But who hath seen her wave her hand?
Or at the casement seen her stand?
Or is she known in all the land?
The Lady of Shalott?

Only reapers, reaping early
In among the bearded barley,
Hear a song that echoes cheerly
From the river winding clearly,
Down to tower'd Camelot;
And by the moon the reapers weary,
Piling sheaves in uplands airy,
Listening, whisper, " 'Tis the fairy
Lady of Shalott."

II

There she weaves by night and day
A magic web with colours gay.
She has heard a whisper say
A curse is on her if she stay
To look down to Camelot.
She knows not what the curse may be,
And so she weaveth steadily,
And little other care has she,
The Lady of Shalott.

The Lady of Shalott

And moving thro' a mirror clear
That hangs before her all the year,
Shadows of the world appear.
There she sees the highway near
Winding down to Camelot.
There the river eddy whirls,
And there the surly village-churls,
And the red cloaks of market girls,
Pass onward from Shalott.

Sometimes a troop of damsels glad,
An abbot on an ambling pad,
Sometimes a curly shepherd lad,
Or long-hair'd page in crimson clad,
Goes by to tower'd Camelot;
And sometimes thro' the mirror blue
The knights come riding two and two;
She hath no loyal knight and true,
The Lady of Shalott.

But in her web she still delights
To weave the mirror's magic sights,
For often thro' the silent nights
A funeral, with plumes and lights,
And music, went to Camelot;
Or when the moon was overhead,
Came two young lovers, lately wed;
"I am half sick of shadows," said
The Lady of Shalott.

III

A bow-shot from her bower-eaves,
He rode between the barley-sheaves,

The Lady of Shalott

The sun came dazzling thro' the leaves,
And flamed upon the brazen greaves
Of bold Sir Lancelot.
A red-cross knight forever kneel'd
To a lady in his shield,
That sparkled on the yellow field,
Beside remote Shalott.

The gemmy bridle glitter'd free,
Like to some branch of stars we see
Hung in the golden Galaxy.
The bridle bells rang merrily
As he rode down to Camelot.
And from his blazon'd baldric slung
A mighty silver bugle hung,
And as he rode his armour rung
Beside remote Shalott.

All in the blue unclouded weather
Thick-jewel'd shone the saddle-leather,
The helmet and the helmet-feather
Burn'd like one burning flame together,
As he rode down to Camelot.
As often thro' the purple night,
Below the starry clusters bright,
Some bearded meteor, trailing light,
Moves over still Shalott.

His broad clear brow in sunlight glow'd;
On burnish'd hooves his war-horse trode;
From underneath his helmet flow'd
His coal-black curls as on he rode,
As he rode down to Camelot.
From the bank and from the river

The Lady of Shalott

He flash'd into the crystal mirror,
"Tirra lirra," by the river
Sang Sir Lancelot.

She left the web, she left the loom,
She made three paces thro' the room,
She saw the water-lily bloom,
She saw the helmet and the plume,
She look'd down to Camelot.
Out flew the web and floated wide;
The mirror crack'd from side to side;
"The curse is come upon me!" cried
The Lady of Shalott.

IV

In the stormy east-wind straining,
The pale yellow woods were waning,
The broad stream in his banks complaining,
Heavily the low sky raining
Over tower'd Camelot;
Down she came and found a boat
Beneath a willow left afloat,
And round about the prow she wrote
The *Lady of Shalott*.

And down the river's dim expanse—
Like some bold seer in a trance,
Seeing all his own mischance—
With a glassy countenance
Did she look to Camelot.
And at the closing of the day
She loosed the chain, and down she lay;
The broad stream bore her far away,
The *Lady of Shalott*.

The Lady of Shalott

Lying robed in snowy white
That loosely flew to left and right—
The leaves upon her falling light—
Thro' the noises of the night
She floated down to Camelot;
And as the boat-head wound along
The willowy hills and fields among,
They heard her singing her last song,
 The Lady of Shalott.

Heard a carol, mournful, holy,
Chanted loudly, chanted lowly,
Till her blood was frozen slowly,
And her eyes were darken'd wholly,
Turn'd to tower'd Camelot.
For ere she reach'd upon the tide
The first house by the water-side,
Singing in her song she died,
 The Lady of Shalott.

Under tower and balcony,
By garden-wall and gallery,
A gleaming shape she floated by,
Dead-pale between the houses high,
Silent into Camelot.
Out upon the wharves they came,
Knight and burgher, lord and dame,
And round the prow they read her name,
 The Lady of Shalott.

Who is this? and what is here?
And in the lighted palace near
Died the sound of royal cheer;
And they cross'd themselves for fear,
All the knights at Camelot;

The Lady of Shalott

But Lancelot mused a little space;
He said, "She has a lovely face;
God in His mercy lend her grace;
The Lady of Shalott."

FORTY SINGING SEAMEN

ALFRED NOYES

I

Across the seas of Wonderland to Mogadore we plodded,
Forty singing seamen in an old black barque,
And we landed in the twilight where a Polyphemus nodded,
With his battered moon-eye winking red and yellow through the dark!
For his eye was growing mellow,
Rich and ripe and red and yellow,
As was time, since old Ulysses made him bellow in the dark!
Since Ulysses bunged his eye up with a pine-torch in the dark!

II

Were they mountains in the gloaming or the giant's ugly shoulders
Just beneath the rolling eyeball, with its bleared and vinous glow,
Red and yellow o'er the purple of the pines among the boulders

Forty Singing Seamen

And the shaggy horror brooding on the sullen slopes
below,

Were they pines among the boulders
Or the hair upon his shoulders?

We were only simple seamen, so of course we didn't
know.

We were simple singing seamen, so of course we couldn't
know.

III

But we crossed a plain of poppies, and we came upon a
fountain

Not of water, but of jewels, like a spray of leaping fire;
And behind it, in an emerald glade, beneath a golden
mountain

There stood a crystal palace, for a sailor to admire;
For a troop of ghosts came round us,

Which with leaves of bay they crowned us,

Then with grog they well-nigh drowned us, to the depth
of our desire!

And 'twas very friendly of them, as a sailor can admire!

IV

There was music all about us, we were growing quite
forgetful

We were only singing seamen from the dirt of London-
town,

Though the nectar that we swallowed seemed to vanish
half regretful

As if we wasn't good enough to take such vittles down,
When we saw a sudden figure,
Tall and black as any nigger,

Forty Singing Seamen

Like the devil—only bigger—drawing near us with a
frown!

Like the devil—but much bigger—and he wore a golden
crown!

V

And “What’s all this?” he growls at us! With dignity
we chaunted,

“Forty singing seamen, sir, as won’t be put upon!”

“What? Englishmen?” he cries, “Well, if ye don’t mind
being haunted,

Faith, you’re welcome to my palace; I’m the famous
Prester John!

Will ye walk into my palace?

I don’t bear ‘ee any malice!

One and all ye shall be welcome in the halls of Prester
John!”

So we walked into the palace and the halls of Prester
John!

VI

Now the door was one great diamond and the hall a
hollow ruby—

Big as Beachy Head, my lads, nay bigger by a half!
And I sees the mate wi’ mouth agape, a-staring like a
booby,

And the skipper close behind him, with his tongue out
like a calf!

Now the way to take it rightly

Was to walk along politely

Just as if you didn’t notice—so I couldn’t help but
laugh!

For they both forgot their manners and the crew was
bound to laugh!

VII

But he took us through his palace, and, my lads, as I'm
a sinner,
We walked into an opal like a sunset-colored cloud—
"My dining room," he says, and, quick as light, we saw
a dinner
Spread before us by the fingers of a hidden fairy crowd;
And the skipper, swaying gently
After dinner, murmurs faintly,
"I looks to-wards you, Prester John, you've done us
very proud!"
And we drank his health with honors, for he *done us*
very proud!

VIII

Then he walks us to his garden where we sees a
feathered demon
Very splendid and important on a sort of spicy tree!
"That's the Phoenix," whispers Prester, "which all
edicated seamen
Knows the only one existent, and *he's* waiting for to flee!
When his hundred years expire
Then he'll set hisself a-fire
And another from his ashes rise most beautiful to see!"
With wings of rose and emerald most beautiful to see!

IX

Then he says, "In yonder forest there's a little silver
river
And whosoever drinks of it, his youth shall never die!
The centuries go by, but Prester John endures for ever

Forty Singing Seamen

With his music in the mountains and his magic on the sky!

While *your* hearts are growing colder,

While your world is growing older,

There's a magic in the distance, where the sea-line meets the sky."

It shall call to singing seamen till the fount o' song is dry!

X

So we thought we'd up and seek it, but that forest fair defied us.

First a crimson leopard laughed at us most horrible to see,

Then a sea-green lion came and sniffed and licked his chops and eyed us,

While a red and yellow unicorn was dancing round a tree!

We was trying to look thinner,

Which was hard, because our dinner

Must ha' made us very tempting to a cat o' high degree!

Must ha' made us very tempting to the whole menarjeree!

XI

So we scuttled from that forest and across the poppy meadows

Where the awful shaggy horror brooded o'er us in the dark!

And we pushes out from shore again a-jumping at our shadows

And pulls away most joyful to the old black barque!

And home again we plodded
While the Polyphemus nodded
With his battered moon-eye winking red and yellow
through the dark.
Oh, the moon above the mountains red and yellow
through the dark!

XII

Across the seas of Wonderland to London-town we
blundered,
Forty singing scamen as was puzzled for to know
If the visions that we saw was caused by—here again
we pondered—
A tipple in a vision forty thousand years ago.
Could the grog we *dreamt* we swallowed
Make us *dream* of all that followed?
We were only simple seamen, so of course we didn't
know!
We were simple singing seamen, so of course we could
not know!

ABOU BEN ADHEM

LEIGH HUNT

Abou Ben Adhem (may his tribe increase!)
Awoke one night from a deep dream of peace,
And saw, within the moonlight in his room,
Making it rich, and like a lily in bloom,
An angel writing in a book of gold;

Abou Ben Adhem

Exceeding peace had made Ben Adhem bold,
And to the presence in the room he said,
"What writest thou?" The vision rais'd its head,
And with a look made all of sweet accord,
Answer'd, "The names of those who love the Lord."
"And is mine one?" said Abou. "Nay, not so,"
Replied the angel. Abou spoke more low,
But cheerily still; and said, "I pray thee, then,
Write me as one who loves his fellow men."
The angel wrote and vanish'd. The next night
It came again with a great wakening light,
And show'd the names whom love of God had bless'd,
And lo! Ben Adhem's name led all the rest.

THE TWO SISTERS OF BINNORIE

ANONYMOUS

There were two sisters sat in a bower;
Binnorie, O Binnorie;
There came a knight to be their wooer;
By the bonnie mill-dams of Binnorie.

He courted the eldest with gloves and rings,
But he loved the youngest above all things.

The eldest was vexèd to despair,
And much she envied her sister fair.

The eldest said to the youngest one,
"Will ye see our father's ships come in?"

The Two Sisters of Binnorie

She's taken her by the lily-white hand,
And led her down to the river strand.

The youngest stood upon a stone;
The eldest came and pushed her in.

"O sister, sister, reach out your hand,
And you shall be heir of half my land.

"O sister, reach me but your glove
And sweet William shall be all your love."

"Sink on, nor hope for hand or glove!
Sweet William shall surely be my love."

Sometimes she sank, sometimes she swam,
Until she came to the mouth of the dam.

Out then came the miller's son
And saw the fair maid swimming in.

"O father, father, draw your dam!
Here's either a mermaid or a swan."

The miller hastened and drew his dam,
And there he found a drowned woman.

You could not see her middle small,
Her girdle was so rich withal.

You could not see her yellow hair
For the gold and pearls that clustered there.

And by there came a harper fine
Who harped to nobles when they dine.

The Two Sisters of Binnorie

And when he looked that lady on,
He sighed and made a heavy moan.

He's made a harp of her breast bone,
Whose sounds would melt a heart of stone.

He's taken three locks of her yellow hair
And with them strung his harp so rare.

He went into her father's hall
To play his harp before them all.

But as he laid it on a stone,
The harp began to play alone.

And soon the harp sang loud and clear,
"Farewell, my father and mother dear.

Farewell, farewell, my brother Hugh,
Farewell, my William, sweet and true."

And then as plain as plain could be,
(Binnorie, O Binnorie)
"There sits my sister who drownèd me
By the bonnie mill-dams of Binnorie!"

KALLUNBORG CHURCH

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

Build at Kallunborg by the sea
A church as stately as church may be,
And there shalt thou wed my daughter fair,"
Said the Earl of Nesvek to Esbern Snare.
And the Baron laughed. But Esbern said,
"Though I lose my soul, I will Helva wed!"
And off he strode, in his pride of will,
To the Troll who dwelt in Ulshoi Hill.
"Build, oh, Troll, a church for me
At Kallunborg by the mighty sea;
Build it stately and build it fair,
Build it quickly," said Esbern Snare.
But the sly dwarf said, "No work is wrought
By Trolls of the Hills, O man, for naught.
What wilt thou give for thy church so fair?"
"Set thy own price!" quoth Esbern Snare.
"When Kallunborg Church is builded well
Thou must the name of the builder tell,
Or thy heart and thy eyes must be my boon."
"Build," said Esbern, "And build it soon."

By night and by day the Troll wrought on;
He hewed the timber, he piled the stone;
But day by day, as the walls rose fair,
Darker and sadder grew Esbern Snare.
He listened by night, he watched by day,
He sought and thought, but he dared not pray;
In vain he called on the Elle-maids shy,
And the Neck and the Nis gave no reply.
Of his evil bargain far and wide

Kallunborg Church

A rumor ran through the country-side;
And Helva of Nesvek, young and fair,
Prayed for the soul of Esbern Snare.
And now the church was well-nigh done;
One pillar it lacked, and one alone;
And the grim Troll muttered "Fool that thou
art.

Tomorrow gives me thy eyes and heart."
By Kallunborg in black despair,
Through wood and meadow, walked Esbern
Snare,

Till, worn and weary, the strong man sank
Under the birches on Ulshoi bank.

At his last days' work he heard the Troll
Hammer and delve in the quarry's hole;
Before him the church stood, large and fair;
"I have builded my tomb!" said Esbern Snare.
And he closed his eyes the sight to hide,
When he heard a light step by his side;
"O Esbern Snare," a sweet voice said,
"Would I might die now in thy stead."
With a grasp by love and by fear made strong,
He held her fast, and he held her long;
With the beating heart of a bird afeard
She hid her face in his flame red beard.
"O love!" he cried, "let me look today
In thine eyes ere mine are plucked away;
Let me hold thee close, let me feel thy heart
Ere mine by the Troll is torn apart.
I sinned, O Helva, for love of thee.
Pray that the Lord Christ pardon me!"

But fast as she prayed, and faster still,
Hammered the Troll in Ulshoi Hill.
He knew, as he wrought, that a loving heart

Kallunborg Church

Was somehow baffling his evil art;
For more than spell of elf or Troll
Is a maiden's prayer for her lover's soul.
And Esbern listened, and caught the sound
Of a troll-wife singing underground;
"Tomorrow comes Fine, father thine,
Lie still, and hush thee, baby mine.
Lie still, my darling. Next sunrise
Thou'l play with Esbern Snare's heart and
eyes!"

"Ho! Ho!" quoth Esbern, "is that your game?
Thanks to the Troll-wife, I know his name!"
The Troll he heard him, and hurried on
To Kallunborg church with the lacking stone.
"Too late, Gaffer Fine!" cried Esbern Snare;
And Troll and pillar vanished in air.

That night the harvesters heard the sound
Of a woman sobbing underground,
And the voice of the Hill-Troll, loud with blame
Of the careless singer who told his name.
Of the Troll of the Church they sing the tune
By the Northern sea in the harvest moon;
And the fishers of Zealand hear him still
Scolding his wife in Ulshoi Hill.
And seaward over its groves of birch
Still looks the tower of Kallunborg church,
Where, first at its altar, a wedded pair,
Stood Helva of Nesvek and Esbern Snare.

The Blessèd Damozel

THE BLESSÈD DAMOZEL

DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI

The blessèd damozel leaned out
From the gold bar of Heaven;
Her eyes were deeper than the depth
Of waters stilled at even;
She had three lilies in her hand,
And the stars in her hair were seven.

Her robe, ungirt from clasp to hem,
No wrought flowers did adorn,
But a white rose of Mary's gift,
For service meetly worn;
The hair that lay along her back
Was yellow like ripe corn.

Her seemed she scarce had been a day
One of God's choristers;
The wonder was not yet quite gone
From that still look of hers;
Albeit, to them she left, her day
Had counted as ten years.

(To one, it is ten years of years.
... Yet now, and in this place,
Surely she leaned o'er me—her hair
Fell all about my face....
Nothing; the autumn fall of leaves
The whole year sets apace.)

The Blessed Damozel

It was the rampart of God's house
That she was standing on;
By God built over the sheer depth
The which is space begun;
So high, that looking downward thence
She scarce could see the sun.

It lies in Heaven, across the flood
Of ether, as a bridge.
Beneath, the tides of day and night
With flame and darkness ridge
The void, as low as where this earth
Spins like a fretful midge.

Around her, lovers, newly met,
'Mid deathless Love's acclaims
Spoke evermore among themselves
Their heart-remembered names;
And the souls mounting up to God
Went by her like thin flames.

And still she bowed herself and stooped
Out of the circling charm;
Until her bosom must have made
The bar she leaned on warm,
And the lilies lay as if asleep
Along her bended arm.

From the fixed place of Heaven she saw
Time like a pulse shake fierce
Through all the worlds. Her gaze still
strove

The Blessèd Damozel

Within the gulf to pierce
Its path; and now she spoke as when
The stars sang in their spheres.

The sun was gone now; the curled moon
Was like a little feather
Fluttering far down the gulf; and now
She spoke through the still weather.
Her voice was like the voice the stars
Had when they sang together.

(Ah, sweet! Even now, in that bird's song,
Strove not her accents there,
Fain to be harkened? When those bells
Possessed the mid-day air,
Strove not her steps to reach my side
Down all the echoing stair?)

“I wish that he were come to me,
For he will come,” she said.
“Have I not prayed in Heaven?—on earth
Lord, Lord, has he not prayed?
Are not two prayers a perfect strength?
And shall I feel afraid?

“When round his head the aureole clings
And he is clothed in white,
I'll take his hand and go with him
To the deep wells of light;
As into a stream we will step down
And bathe there in God's sight.

“We two will stand beside that shrine,
Occult, withheld, untrod,
Whose lamps are stirred continually

The Blessed Damozel

With prayers sent up to God;
And see our old prayers, granted, melt
Each like a little cloud.

“We two will lie i’ the shadow of
That living, mystic tree
Within whose secret growth the Dove
Is sometimes felt to be,
While every leaf that his plumes touch
Saith His name audibly.

“And I myself will teach to him,
I myself, lying so,
The songs I sing here; which his voice
Shall pause in, hushed and slow,
And find some knowledge at each pause,
Or some new thing to know.”

(Alas! We two, we two, thou say’st!
Yea, one wast thou with me
That once of old. But shall God lift
To endless unity
The soul whose likeness with thy soul
Was but its love for thee?)

“We two,” she said, “will seek the grove
Where the Lady Mary is,
With her five handmaidens, whose names
Are five sweet symphonies,
Cecily, Gertrude, Magdalen,
Margaret and Rosalys.

“Circlewise sit they, with bound locks,
And foreheads garlanded;
Into the fine cloth white like flame

The Blessed Damozel

Weaving the golden thread,
To fashion the birth-robes for them
Who are just born, being dead.

“He shall fear, haply, and be dumb;
Then will I lay my cheek
To his, and tell about our love,
Not once abashed or weak;
And the dear Mother will approve
My pride, and let me speak.

“Herself shall bring us, hand in hand,
To him round whom all souls
Kneel, the clear-ranged, unnumbered heads
Bowed with their aureoles;
And angels meeting us shall sing
To their citherns and citoles.

“There will I ask of Christ the Lord
This much for him and me;—
Only to live as once on earth
With Love, only to be
As then awhile, forever now
Together, I and he.”

She gazed and listened and then said,
Less sad of speech than mild,—
“All this is when he comes.” She ceased.
The light thrilled towards her, fill’d
With angels in strong level flight.
Her eyes prayed, and she smil’d.

(I saw her smile) But soon their path
Was vague in distant spheres;
And then she cast her arms along

The golden barriers,
And laid her face between her hands,
And wept. (I heard her tears.)

MEETING AT NIGHT

ROBERT BROWNING

The grey sea and the long black land;
And the yellow half-moon large and low;
And the startled little waves that leap
In fiery ringlets from their sleep,
As I gain the cove with pushing prow,
And quench its speed i' the slushy sand.

Then a mile of warm, sea-scented beach;
Three fields to cross till a farm appears;
A tap at the pane, the quick sharp scratch
And blue spurt of a lighted match,
And a voice less loud, through its joys and fears
Than the two hearts beating each to each!

PARTING AT MORNING

ROBERT BROWNING

Round the cape of a sudden came the sea,
And the sun looked over the mountain's rim:
And straight was a path of gold for him,
And the need of a world of men for me.

Eve

EVE

RALPH HODGSON

Eve, with her basket, was
Deep in the bells and grass,
Wading in bells and grass
Up to her knees,
Picking a dish of sweet
Berries and plums to eat,
Down in the bells and grass
Under the trees.

Mute as a mouse in a
Corner the cobra lay,
Curled round a bough of the
Cinnamon tall . . .
Now to get even and
Humble proud heaven and
Now was the moment or
Never at all.

“Eva!” Each syllable
Light as a flower fell,
“Eva!” he whispered the
Wondering maid,
Soft as a bubble sung
Out of a linnet’s lung,
Soft and most silverly
“Eva!” he said.

Picture that orchard sprite,
Eve, with her body white,
Supple and smooth to her

Slim finger tips,
Wondering, listening,
Listening, wondering,
Eve with a berry
Half-way to her lips.

Oh, had our simple Eve
Seen through the make-believe!
Had she but known the
Pretender he was!
Out of the boughs he came,
Whispering still her name,
Tumbling in twenty rings
Into the grass.

Here was the strangest pair
In the world anywhere,
Eve in the bells and grass
Kneeling, and he
Telling his story low . . .
Singing birds saw them go
Down the dark path to
The Blasphemous Tree.

Oh, what a clatter when
Titmouse and Jenny Wren
Saw him successful and
Taking his leave!
How the birds rated him,
How they all hated him!
How they all pitied
Poor motherless Eve!

Picture her crying
Outside in the lane,

Eve, with no dish of sweet
Berries and plums to eat,
Haunting the gate of the
Orchard in vain . . .
Picture the lewd delight
Under the hill tonight—
“Eva!” the toast goes round,
“Eva!” again.

AN OLD WOMAN OF THE ROADS

PADRAIC COLUM

O, to have a little house!
To own the hearth and stool and all!
The heaped-up sods upon the fire,
The pile of turf against the wall!

To have a clock with weights and chains
And pendulum swinging up and down!
A dresser filled with shining delf,
Speckled and white and blue and brown!

I could be busy all the day
Clearing and sweeping hearth and floor,
And fixing on their shelf again
My white and blue and speckled store!

I could be quiet there at night
Beside the fire and by myself,
Sure of a bed, and loth to leave
The ticking clock and the shining delf!

An Old Woman of the Roads

Och! But I'm weary of mist and dark,
And roads where there's never a house or bush,
And tired I am of bog and road,
And the crying wind and the lonesome hush!

And I am praying to God on high,
And I am praying Him night and day,
For a little house—a house of my own—
Out of the wind's and the rain's way.

THE GYPSY

ELEANOR FARJEON

A gypsy lives on Kithurst,
A gypsy with a dog;
She smokes her pipe inside the barn
And fills the barn with fog.

The rain came down on Kithurst,
There never was such rain!
It blurred the outline of the hills
And drowned the Sussex plain.

I found the barn on Kithurst
And peered within the gloom;
I cried aloud for shelter,
The gypsy growled "No room!"

The barn was foul with smells and smoke,
The barn was full of litter
And blackened with unfriendliness:
The rain was not so bitter.

The Gypsy

The mongrel howled, the gypsy scowled—
“No room!” she growled, “No room!”
I turned about and took the rain,
The kindly rain, the friendly rain,
I took the rain on Kithurst
And left her to her gloom.

MEG MERRILIES

JOHN KEATS

Old Meg she was a gypsy;
And lived upon the moors:
Her bed it was the brown heath turf,
And her house was out of doors.
Her apples were swart blackberries,
Her currants, pods of broom;
Her wine was dew of the wild white rose,
Her book a church-yard tomb.

Her brothers were the craggy hills,
Her sisters larchen trees;
Alone with her great family
She lived as she did please.
No breakfast had she many a morn,
No dinner many a noon.
And, 'stead of supper, she would stare
Full hard against the moon.

But every morn, of woodbine fresh
She made her garlanding,

And, every night, the dark glen yew
She wove, and she would sing.
And with her fingers, old and brown,
She plaited mats of rushes,
And gave them to the cottagers
She met among the bushes.

Old Meg was brave as Margaret Queen,
And tall as Amazon;
An old red blanket cloak she wore,
A chip-hat had she on.
God rest her aged bones somewhere!
She died full long agone!

THE FECKENHAM MEN

JOHN DRINKWATER

The jolly men at Feckenham
Don't count their goods as common men,
Their heads are full of silly dreams
From half-past ten to half-past ten,
They'll tell you why the stars are bright,
And some sheep black and some sheep white.

The jolly men at Feckenham
Draw wages of the sun and rain,
And count as good as golden coin
The blossoms on the window-pane,
And Lord! they love a sinewy tale
Told over pots of foaming ale!

The Feckenham Men

Now here's a tale of Feckenham
Told to me by a Feckenham man,
Who, being only eighty years,
Ran always when the red fox ran,
And looked upon the earth with eyes
As quiet as unclouded skies.

These jolly men of Feckenham
One day when summer strode in power
Went down, it seems, among their lands
And saw their bean fields all in flower—
“Wheat ricks,” they said, “be good to see;
What would a rick of blossoms be?”

So straight they brought the sickles out
And worked all day till day was done,
And builded them a good square rick
Of scented bloom beneath the sun.
And was not this I tell to you
A fiery-hearted thing to do?

HE THOUGHT HE SAW

LEWIS CARROLL

He thought he saw an elephant,
That practised on a fife:
He looked again, and found it was
A letter from his wife.
“At length I realize,” he said,
“The bitterness of life.”

He Thought He Saw

He thought he saw a buffalo
Upon the chimney-piece:
He looked again, and saw it was
His sister's husband's niece.
"Unless you leave this house," he said,
"I'll send for the police!"

He thought he saw a rattlesnake
That questioned him in Greek:
He looked again, and found it was
The middle of next week.
"The one thing I regret," he said,
"Is that it cannot speak."

He thought he saw a banker's clerk
Descending from a bus:
He looked again, and found it was
A hippopotamus:
"If this should stay to dine," he said,
"There won't be much for us!"

He thought he saw an albatross
That fluttered round the lamp:
He looked again, and saw it was
A penny-postage stamp.
"You'd best be getting home," he said,
"The nights are very damp."

He thought he saw a coach-and-four
That stood beside his bed:
He looked again, and found it was
A bear without a head.
"Poor thing," he said, "Poor silly thing!
It's waiting to be fed!"

He Thought He Saw

He thought he saw a kangaroo
That worked a coffee-mill:
He looked again, and found it was
A vegetable-pill.
"Were I to swallow this," he said,
"I should be very ill!"

THE ZOO

HUMBERT WOLFE

I scarcely think
I like the Zoo
as much as other
people do.

First when I see
the elephants,
they seem in trouble
with their pants,

and then the hippo-
potamus
says, "Who in blazes
made me thus?"

And I observe the
chimpanzee
thanking his God
he's not like me.

The Zoo

While all varieties
of cat,
make me feel dumpy,
coarse, and fat.

And that 's not all!
The eagles make
me stare as though
my heart would break

at the great spaces
of the air.

And why? it isn't
my affair

if hippo is a
sort of evil
joke perpetrated
by the devil,

and of all broken-
hearted things
the brokenest are
captive wings!

And yet I can-
not like the Zoo
as much as other
people do.

The Yarn of the Nancy Bell

THE YARN OF THE *NANCY BELL*

WILLIAM S. GILBERT

Twas on the shores that round our coast
From Deal to Ramsgate span,
That I found alone on a piece of stone
An elderly naval man.

His hair was weedy, his beard was long,
And weedy and long was he,
And I heard this wight on the shore recite,
In a singular minor key;

“Oh, I am a cook, and the captain bold,
And the mate of the *Nancy* brig
And a bo’sun tight, and a midshipmite,
And the crew of the captain’s gig!”

And he shook his fists and he tore his hair,
Till I really felt afraid,
For I couldn’t help thinking the man had been drinking,
And so I simply said:

“Oh elderly man, it’s little I know
Of the duties of men of the sea,
But I’ll eat my hand if I understand
How you can possibly be

“At once a cook, and a captain bold,
And the mate of the *Nancy* brig,
And a bo’sun tight, and a midshipmite,
And the crew of the captain’s gig.”

The Yarn of the Nancy Bell

Then he gave a hitch to his trousers, which
Is a trick all seamen larn,
And having got rid of a thumping quid,
He spun this painful yarn:

“ ‘Twas in the good ship *Nancy Bell*
That we sailed to the Indian sea,
And there on a reef we came to grief,
Which has often occurred to me.

“And pretty nigh all o’ the crew was drowned
(There was seventy-seven o’ soul),
And only ten of the *Nancy*’s men
Said ‘Here’ to the muster roll.

“There was me and the cook and the captain bold,
And the mate of the *Nancy* brig,
And the bo’sun tight, and a midshipmite,
And the crew of the captain’s gig.

“For a month we’d neither wittles nor drink,
Till a-hungary we did feel,
So we drawed a lot, and accordin’ shot
The captain for our meal.

“The next lot fell to the *Nancy*’s mate,
And delicate dish he made;
Then our appetite with the midshipmite
We seven survivors stayed.

“And then we murdered the bo’sun tight,
And he much resembled pig;
Then we wittled free, did the cook and me,
On the crew of the captain’s gig.

The Yarn of the Nancy Bell

“Then only the cook and me was left,
And the delicate question ‘which
Of us two goes to the kettle?’ arose
And we argued it out as sich.

“For I loved that cook as a brother, I did,
And the cook he worshipped me;
But we’d both be blowed if we’d either be stowed
In the other chap’s hold, you see.

“ ‘I’ll be eat if you dines off me,’ says Tom,
‘Yes, that,’ says I, ‘you’ll be!’
‘I’m boiled if I die, my friend,’ quoth I,
And ‘Exactly so!’ quoth he.

“Says he, ‘Dear James, to murder me
Were a foolish thing to do,
For don’t you see that you can’t cook me,
While I can—and will—cook you?’

“So he boils the water and takes the salt
And the pepper in portions true
(Which he never forgot), and some chopped shalot,
And some sage and parsley, too.

“ ‘Come here,’ says he, with proper pride,
Which his smiling features tell,
‘ ’Twill soothing be if I let you see,
How extremely nice you’ll smell.’

“And he stirred it round and round and round
And he sniffed at the foaming froth;
When I ups with his heels, and smothers his squeals
In the scum of the boiling broth.

The Yarn of the Nancy Bell

“And I eat that cook in a week or less,
And—as I eating be
The last of his chops, why, I almost drops,
For a vessel in sight I see.

“And I never grieve, and I never smile,
And I never larf nor play
But I sit and croak, and a single joke
I have—which is to say;

“Oh, I am a cook, and a captain bold,
And the mate of the *Nancy* brig,
And a bo’sun tight, and a midshipmite,
And the crew of the captain’s gig!”

SKIPPER IRESON’S RIDE

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

Of all the rides since the birth of time,
Told in story or sung in rhyme,—
On Apuleius’s Golden Ass,
Or one-eyed Calendar’s horse of brass,
Witch astride, or a human hack,
Islam’s prophet on Al-Borak,—
The strangest ride that ever was sped
Was Ireson’s out of Marblehead.
Old Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,
Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart
By the women of Marblehead.

Skipper Ireson's Ride

Body of turkey, head of owl,
Wings a-droop, like a rained-on fowl,
Feathered and ruffled in every part,
Skipper Ireson stood in the cart.
Scores of women, old and young,
Strong of muscle and glib of tongue,
Pushed and pulled up the rocky lane,
Shouting and singing the shrill refrain;
"Here's Flud Oirson, fur his horrd hoort
Torr'd an' futherr'd an' corr'd in a corrt
By the women o' Morble'ead!"

Wrinkled scolds with hands on hips,
Girls with bloom of cheek and lips,
Wild-eyed, free-limbed, such as chase
Bacchus round some antique vase,
Brief of skirt, with ankles bare,
Loose of kerchief and loose of hair,
With conch-shells blowing and fish-horns' twang,
Over and over the Mænads sang;
"Here's Flud Oirson, fur his horrd hoort
Torr'd an' futherr'd an' corr'd in a corrt
By the women o' Morble'ead!"

Small pity for him! He sailed away
From a leaking ship, in Chaleur Bay,
Sailed away from a sinking wreck,
With his own town's people on her deck.
"Lay by! Lay by!" they called to him.
Back he answered, "Sink or swim!
Brag of your catch or fish again!"
And off he sailed through the fog and rain.
Old Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart
Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart
By the women of Marblehead.

Skipper Ireson's Ride

Fathoms deep, in dark Chaleur
That wreck shall lie forever more,
Mother and sister, wife and maid,
Looked from the rocks of Marblehead
Over the moaning and rainy sea—
Looked for the coming that might not be.
What did the winds and the sea-birds say
Of the cruel captain who sailed away?
Old Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart
Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart
By the women of Marblehead.

Through the street on either side
Up flew windows, doors flung wide;
Sharp-tongued spinsters, old wives grey,
Treble lent the fish-horn's bray.
Sea-worn grandsires, cripple-bound,
Hulks of old sailors run aground,
Shook head, and fist, and hat, and cane,
And cracked with curses the hoarse refrain;
“Here's Flud Oirson, fur his horrd hoort
Torr'd an' futherr'd an' corr'd in a corrt
By the women o' Morble'ead!”

Sweetly along the Salem road
Bloom of orchard and lilac showed.
Little the wicked skipper knew
Of the fields so green and the sky so blue.
Riding there in his sorry trim
Like an Indian idol, glum and grim.
Scarcely he seemed the sound to hear
Of voices shouting far and near;
“Here's Flud Oirson, fur his horrd hoort
Torr'd an' futherr'd an' corr'd in a corrt
By the women o' Morble'ead!”

Skipper Ireson's Ride

"Hear me, neighbors!" at last he cried—
"What to me is this noisy ride?
What is the shame that clothes the skin
To the nameless horror that lives within?
Waking or sleeping, I see a wreck
And hear a cry from a reeling deck!
Hate me and curse me—I only dread
The hand of God and the face of the dead!"
Said old Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart
Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart
By the women of Marblehead.

Then the wife of the skipper lost at sea
Said "God has touched him—why should we?"
Said on old wife mourning her only son
"Cut the rogue's tether and let him run."
So with soft relentings and rude excuse,
Half scorn, half pity, they cut him loose;
And gave him a cloak to hide him in,
And left him alone with his shame and sin.
Poor Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,
Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart
By the women of Marblehead.

A LADY AND AN APE

W. S. GILBERT

A Lady fair, of lineage high,
Was loved by an Ape in the days gone by.
The Maid was radiant as the sun,
The Ape was a most unsightly one—
So it would not do,
His scheme fell through,

A Lady and an Ape

For the Maid, when his love took formal shape,
Expressed such terror
At his monstrous error,
That he stammered an apology and made his 'scape,
The picture of a disconcerted Ape.

With a view of rise in the social scale,
He shaved his bristles, and he docked his tail,
He grew moustachios, and he took his tub,
And he paid a guinea to a beauty club—

But it would not do,
The scheme fell through,

For the Maid was Beauty's fairest Queen,
With golden tresses
Like a real princess's,

While the Ape, despite his razor keen,
Was the apiest Ape that ever was seen!

He bought white ties, and he bought dress suits,
He crammed his feet into bright tight boots,
And to start his life on a bran-new plan,
He christened himself Darwinian Man!

But it would not do,
The scheme fell through,

For the Maiden fair, whom the monkey craved,
Was a radiant Being,
With a brain far-seeing,

While Darwinian Man, though well-behaved,
At best is only a monkey shaved!

TRUE THOMAS

ANONYMOUS

True Thomas lay on Huntlie bank;
A marvel he did see;
For there he saw a lady bright,
Come riding down by the Eildon tree.

Her skirt was of the grass-green silk,
Her mantle of the velvet fine;
On every lock of her horse's mane
Hung fifty silver bells and nine.

True Thomas he pulled off his cap,
And bowed low down on his knee;
"All hail, thou mighty Queen of Heaven!
For thy peer on earth could never be."

"O no, O no, Thomas," she said,
"That name does not belong to me;
I'm but the Queen of fair Elfland,
That hither am come to visit thee.

"Harp and carp, Thomas," she said,
"Harp and carp along with me;
And if ye dare to kiss my lips,
Sure of your body I will be!"

"Betide me weal, betide me woe,
That threat shall never frighten me!"
Then he has kissed her on the lips,
All underneath the Eildon tree.

“Now ye must go with me,” she said,
“True Thomas, ye must go with me;
And ye must serve me seven years,
Through weal or woe as may chance to be.”

She’s mounted on her milk-white steed,
She’s taken True Thomas up behind;
And aye, whene’er her bridle rang,
The steed flew swifter than the wind.

O they rode on, and further on,
The steed flew swifter than the wind;
Until they reached a desert wide,
And living land was left behind.

“Light down, light down now, Thomas,” she
said,
“And lean your head upon my knee;
Light down, and rest a little space,
And I will show you marvels three.

“O see ye not yon narrow road,
So thick beset with thorns and briers?
That is the path of righteousness,
Though after it but few enquires.

“And see ye not yon broad, broad road,
That stretches o’er the lily leven?
That is the path of wickedness,
Though some call it the road to heaven.

“And see ye not yon bonny road,
That winds about the green hillside?
That is the way to fair Elfland,
Where you and I this night must bide.

True Thomas

“But, Thomas, ye shall hold your tongue,
Whatever ye may hear or see;
For if ye speak word in Elfin land,
Ye'll ne'er win back to your own countree!”

O they rode on, and further on;
They waded through rivers above the knee,
And they saw neither sun nor moon,
But they heard the roaring of a sea.

It was murk, murk night; there was no
starlight;
They waded through red blood to the knee;
For all the blood that's shed on earth,
Runs through the springs of that countree.

At last they came to a garden green,
And she pulled an apple from on high—
“Take this for thy wages, True Thomas;
It will give thee the tongue that can never lie!”

“My tongue is my own,” True Thomas he said,
“A goodly gift ye would give to me!
I neither could to buy or sell
At fair or tryst where I may be.

“I could neither speak to prince or peer,
Nor ask of grace from fair ladie.”
“Now hold thy peace!” the lady said,
“For as I say, so must it be.”

He has gotten a coat of the even cloth,
And a pair of shoes of the velvet green;
And till seven years were gone and past,
True Thomas on earth was never seen.

REINE D'AMOUR

FRANCIS TURNER PALGRAVE

Close as the stars along the sky
The flowers were in the mead,
The purple heart, the golden eye,
And crimson-flaming weed:
And each one sighed as I went by,
And touched my garments green,
And bade me wear her on my heart
And take her for my Queen
Of Love,
And take her for my Queen.

And one in virgin white was dressed
With lowly gracious head;
And one unveiled a burning breast
With Love's own ardor red:
All rainbow bright, with laughter light,
They flickered o'er the green,
Each whispering I should pluck her there
And take her as my Queen
Of Love,
And take her for my Queen.

But sudden at my feet looked up
A little star-like thing,
Pure odor in a perfect cup,
That made my bosom sing.
'Twas not for size, nor gorgeous dyes,
But her own self, I ween,
Her own sweet self, that bade me stoop

Reine D'Amour

And take her for my Queen
Of Love,
And take her for my Queen.

Now all day long and every day
Her beauty on me grows,
And holds with stronger, sweeter sway
Than lily or than rose;
And this one star outshines by far
All in the meadow green;
And so I wear her on my heart
And take her for my Queen
Of Love,
And take her for my Queen.

THE THREE CHERRY TREES

WALTER DE LA MARE

There were three cherry trees once,
Grew in a garden all shady;
And there for delight of so gladsome a sight,
Walked a most beautiful lady,
Dreamed a most beautiful lady.

Birds in those branches did sing,
Blackbirds and thrush and linnet,
But she walking there was by far the most fair—
Lovelier than all else within it,
Blackbird and thrush and linnet.

The Three Cherry Trees

But blossoms to berries do come,
All hanging on stalks light and slender,
And one long summer's day charmed that lady away,
With vows sweet and merry and tender,
A lover with voice low and tender.

Moss and lichen the green branches deck;
Weeds nod in its paths green and shady;
Yet a light footstep seems there to wander in dreams,
The ghost of that beautiful lady,
That happy and beautiful lady.

NANCY HANKS (1784-1818)

STEPHEN AND ROSEMARY BENÉT

If Nancy Hanks
Came back as a ghost,
Seeking news
Of what she loved most,
She'd ask first
"Where's my son?
What's happened to Abe?
What's he done?

"Poor little Abe,
Left all alone
Except for Tom,
Who's a rolling stone;

Nancy Hanks (1784-1818)

He was only nine
The year I died.
I remember still
How hard he cried.

“Scraping along
In a little shack,
With hardly a shirt
To cover his back,
And a prairie wind
To blow him down,
Or pinching times
If he went to town.

“You wouldn’t know
About my son?
Did he grow tall?
Did he have fun?
Did he learn to read?
Did he get to town?
Do you know his name?
Did he get on?”

THE BALLAD OF THE KING’S JEST

RUDYARD KIPLING

When spring-time flushes the desert grass,
Our kafilas wind through the Khyber Pass.
Lean are the camels but fat the frails,
Light are the purses but heavy the bales,
As the snowbound trade of the North comes down
To the market-square of Peshawur town.

The Ballad of the King's Jest

In a turquoise twilight, crisp and chill,
A kafila camped at the foot of the hill.
Then blue smoke-haze of the cooking rose,
And tent-peg answered to hammer-nose;
And the picketed ponies, shag and wild,
Strained at their ropes as the feed was piled;
And the bubbling camels beside the load
Sprawled for a furlong adown the road;
And the Persian pussy-cats, brought for sale,
Spat at the dogs from the camel-bale;
And the tribesmen bellowed to hasten the food;
And the camp-fires twinkled by Fort Jumrood;
And there fled on the wings of the gathering dusk
A savour of camels and carpets and musk,
A murmur of voices, a reek of smoke,
To tell us the trade of the Khyber woke.
The lid of the flesh-pot chattered high,
The knives were whetted and—then came I
To Mahbub Ali, the muleteer,
Patching his bridles and counting his gear,
Crammed with the gossip of half a year.
But Mahbub Ali the kindly said,
“Better is speech when belly is fed.”
So we plunged the hand to the mid-wrist deep
In a cinnamon stew of the fat-tailed sheep,
And he who never hath tasted the food,
By Allah! he knoweth not bad from good.

We cleansed our beards of the mutton-grease,
We lay on the mats and were filled with peace,
And the talk slid north, and the talk slid south,
With the sliding puffs from the hookah-mouth.

Four things greater than all things are,—
Women and Horses and Power and War.

The Ballad of the King's Jest

We spake of them all, but the last the most.
For I sought a word of a Russian post,
Of a shifty promise, an unsheathed sword
And a grey-coat guard on the Helmund ford.

Then Mahbub Ali lowered his eyes
In the fashion of one who is weaving lies.
Quoth he; "Of the Russians who can say?
When the night is gathering all is grey.
But we look that the gloom of the night shall die
In the morning flush of a blood-red sky.
Friend of my heart, is it meet or wise
To warn a King of his enemies?
We know what Heaven or Hell may bring,
But no man knoweth the mind of a King.
That unsought counsel is cursed of God
Attesteth the story of Wali Dad.

"His sire was leaky of tongue and pen,
His dam was a clucking Khuttuck hen;
And the colt bred close to the vice of each,
For he carried the curse of an unstanch'd speech.
Therewith madness—so that he sought
The favor of kings at the Kabul court;
And travelled, in hope of honour, far
To the line where the grey-coat squadrons are.
There have I journeyed too—but I
Saw naught, said naught, and—did not die!
He harkened to rumor, and snatched at a breath
Of 'this one knoweth' and 'that one saith,'—
Legends that ran from mouth to mouth
Of a grey-coat coming, and sack of the South.
These have I also heard—they pass
With each new spring and the winter grass.

The Ballad of the King's Jest

“Hot-foot southward, forgotten of God,
Back to the city ran Wali Dad,
Even to Kabul—in full durbar
The King held talk with his Chief in War.
Into the press of the crowd he broke,
And what he had heard of the coming spoke.
Then Gholam Hyder, the Red Chief, smiled,
As a mother might on a babbling child;
But those who would laugh restrained their breath,
When the face of the King showed dark as death.
Evil it is in full durbar
To cry to a ruler of gathering War!
Slowly he led to a peach-tree small,
That grew by a cleft of the city wall.
And he said to the boy; ‘They shall praise thy zeal
So long as the red spurt follows the steel.
And the Russ is upon us even now?
Great is thy prudence—wait them, thou.
Watch from the tree. Thou art young and strong.
Surely the vigil is not for long.
The Russ is upon us, thy clamour ran?
Surely an hour shall bring their van.
Wait and watch. When the host is near
Shout aloud that my men may hear.’

“Friend of my heart, is it meet or wise
To warn a King of his enemies?
A guard was set that he might not flee—
A score of bayonets ringed the tree.
The peach-bloom fell in showers of snow,
When he shook at his death as he looked below.
By the power of God, who alone is great,
Till the seventh day he fought with his fate.
Then madness took him, and men declare
That he mowed in the branches as ape and bear,

The Ballad of the King's Jest

And last as a sloth, ere his body failed,
And he hung like a bat in the forks, and wailed,
And sleep the cords of his hands untied,
And he fell, and was caught on the points—and died.

“Heart of my heart, is it meet or wise
To warn a King of his enemies?
We know what Heaven or Hell may bring,
But no man knoweth the mind of the King.
Of the grey-coat coming who can say?
When the night is gathering all is grey.
Two things greater than all things are,
The first is Love, and the second War.
And since we know not how War may prove,
Heart of my heart, let us talk of Love!”

THE THREE KINGS

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

Three Kings came riding from far away,
Melchior and Gaspar and Baltasar;
Three Wise Men out of the East were they,
And they travelled by night and they slept by day,
For their guide was a beautiful, wonderful star.

The star was so beautiful, large and clear,
That all the other stars in the sky
Became a white mist in the atmosphere,
And by this they knew that the coming was near
Of the Prince foretold in the prophecy.

The Three Kings

Three caskets they bore on their saddle-bows
Three caskets of gold with golden keys:
Their robes were of crimson silk with rows
Of bells and pomegranates and furbelows,
Their turbans like blossoming almond-trees.

And so the Three Kings rode into the West,
Through the dusk of night, over hill and dell,
And sometimes they nodded with beard on breast,
And sometimes talked, as they paused to rest,
With the people they met at some wayside well.

“Of the child that is born,” said Baltasar,
Good people, I pray you, tell us the news;
For we in the East have seen his star,
And have ridden fast and have ridden far
To find and worship the King of the Jews.”

And the people answered, “You ask in vain;
We know of no King but Herod the Great!”
They thought the Wise Men were men insane,
As they spurred their horses across the plain
Like riders in haste, who cannot wait.

And when they came to Jerusalem,
Herod the Great, who had heard this thing,
Sent for the Wise Men and questioned them;
And said, “Go down into Bethlehem,
And bring me tidings of this new King.”

So they rode away; and the star stood still,
The only one in the gray of morn;
Yes, it stopped—it stood still of its own free will,

The Three Kings

Right over Bethlehem on the hill,
The city of David where Christ was born.

And the Three Kings rode through the gates and the
guard,

Through the silent street, till their horses turned
And neighed as they entered the great inn-yard;
But the windows were closed and the doors were barred,
And only a light in the stable burned.

And cradled there in the scented hay,
In the air made sweet by the breath of kine,
The little child in a manger lay,
The child who would be the king one day
Of a kingdom not human but divine.

His mother Mary of Nazareth
Sat watching beside his place of rest,
Watching the even flow of his breath,
For the joy of life and the terror of death
Were mingled together in her breast.

They laid their offerings at his feet;
The gold was their tribute to a King,
The frankincense, with its odor sweet,
Was for the Priest, the Paraclete,
The myrrh for the body's burying.

And the mother wondered and bowed her head,
And sat as still as a statue of stone;
And her heart was troubled yet comforted,
Remembering what the Angel had said
Of an endless reign and of David's throne.

The Three Kings

Then the Three Kings rode out of the city gate,
With a clatter of hoofs in proud array;
But they went not back to Herod the Great,
For they knew his malice and feared his hate,
And returned to their homes by another way.

GATES AND DOORS

A Ballad of Christmas Eve.

JOYCE KILMER

There was a gentle hostler
(And blessed be his name!)
He opened up the stable
The night Our Lady came.
Our Lady and St. Joseph,
He gave them food and bed,
And Jesus Christ has given him
A glory round his head.

So let the gate swing open
However poor the yard,
Lest weary people visit you
And find their passage barred.
Unlatch the door at midnight
And let your lantern's glow
Shine out to guide the traveller's feet
To you across the snow.

Gates and Doors

There was a courteous hostler
(He is in Heaven tonight)
He held Our Lady's bridle
And helped her to alight;
He spread clean straw before her
Whereon she might lie down,
And Jesus Christ has given him
An everlasting crown.

Unlock the door this evening
And let your gate swing wide,
Let all who ask for shelter
Come speedily inside.
What if your yard be narrow?
What if your house be small?
There is a Guest is coming
Will glorify it all.

There was a joyous hostler
Who knelt on Christmas morn
Beside the radiant manger
Wherein his Lord was born.
His heart was full of laughter
His soul was full of bliss
When Jesus on His Mother's lap
Gave him His hand to kiss.

Unbar your heart this evening
And keep no stranger out,
Take from soul's great portal
The barrier of doubt.
To humble folk and weary
Give hearty welcoming,
Your breast shall be tomorrow
The cradle of a King.

THE OX

JOHN GRAY

The holy night that Christ was born
The ox stood reverently apart,
Both ruminating eaten corn,
And pondering within his heart.

There be (he pondered) certain beasts,
Which stand about Jehovah's throne,
Which hearken to the Lord's behests,
Which have no thought but Him alone.

Now I am surely one of these.
And, since he comes to my abode,
'Tis fitting I should bow my knees
Before the Holy Child of God.

I hold it for a solemn troth
I shall no more be sacrificed.
For when to prophethood He groweth,
I cease to symbolise the Christ.

Who is the noble Holocaust
As anciently himself did plan
Himself to be the Holy Host
To feed and succour fallen man.

I cannot tell the Mother dear
My joy; but softly if I low,
The noble Infant Christ will hear
His bullock praise Him. He will know.

Kubla Khan

KUBLA KHAN

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

In Xanadu did Kubla Khan
A stately pleasure-dome decree;
Where Alph, the sacred river, ran
Through caverns measureless to man
Down to a sunless sea.
So twice five miles of fertile ground
With walls and towers were girdled round;
And there were gardens bright with sinuous rills
Where blossomed many an incense-bearing tree;
And here were forests ancient as the hills,
Enfolding sunny spots of greenery.

But oh! that deep romantic chasm which slanted
Down the green hill athwart a cedarn cover!
A savage place! as holy and enchanted
As e'er beneath a waning moon was haunted
By woman wailing for her demon-lover!
And from this chasm, with ceaseless turmoil seething,
As if this earth in fast thick pants were breathing,
A mighty fountain momently was forced;
Amid whose swift half-intermittent burst
Huge fragments vaulted like rebounding hail,
Or chaffy grain beneath the thresher's flail:
And 'midst these dancing rocks at once and ever
It flung up momently the sacred river.
Five miles meandering with a mazy motion
Through wood and dale the sacred river ran,
Then reached the caverns measureless to man,
And sank in tumult to a lifeless ocean:
And midst this tumult Kubla heard from far
Ancestral voices prophesying war!

The shadow of the dome of pleasure
Floated mid-way on the waves;
Where was heard the mingled measure
From the fountain and the caves.
It was a miracle of rare device,
A sunny pleasure-dome with caves of ice!
A damsel with a dulcimer
In a vision once I saw:
It was an Abyssinian maid,
And on her dulcimer she played,
Singing of Mount Abora.
Could I revive within me
Her symphony and song,
To such a deep delight 'twould win me
That with music loud and long,
I would build that dome in air,
That sunny dome! those caves of ice!
And all who heard should see them there,
And all should cry, Beware! Beware!
His flashing eyes, his floating hair!
Weave a circle round him thrice,
And close your eyes with holy dread,
For he on honey-dew hath fed,
And drunk the milk of Paradise.

ARGUS

ELEANOR FARJEON

Argus was a puppy,
Frisking full of joy.
Ulysses was his master
Who sailed away to Troy.

Argus on the seashore
Watched the ship's white track,
And barked a little puppy bark
To bring his master back.

Argus was an old dog,
Too gray and tired for tears.
He lay outside the house door
And watched for twenty years.

When twenty years were ended
Ulysses came from Troy.
Argus wagged an old dog's wag,
And then he died for joy.

ON A FAVOURITE CAT DROWNED IN A TUB OF GOLD FISHES

THOMAS GRAY

Twas on a lofty vase's side,
Where China's gayest art had dyed
The azure flowers that blow,
Demurest of the tabby kind,
The pensive Selima, reclined,
Gazed on the lake below.

Her conscious tail her joy declared;
The fair, round face, the snowy beard,
The velvet of her paws,
Her coat that with the tortoise vies,
Her ears of jet, and emerald eyes,
She saw, and purr'd applause.

On a Favourite Cat Drowned in a Tub of Gold Fishes

Still had she gazed, but 'midst the tide
Two angel forms were seen to glide,
The genii of the stream;
Their scaly armour's Tyrian hue
Through richest purple, to the view
Betray'd a golden gleam.

The hapless nymph with wonder saw;
A whisker first, and then a claw
With many an ardent wish
She stretch'd, in vain, to reach the prize.
What female heart can gold despise?
What cat's averse to fish?

Presumptuous maid! with look intent
Again she stretch'd, again she bent,
Nor knew the gulf between.
(Malignant Fate sat by and smiled.)
The slipp'ry verge her feet beguiled;
She tumbled headlong in!

Eight times emerging from the flood
She mew'd to every watery god
Some speedy aid to send:
No dolphin came, no Nereid stirr'd,
Nor cruel Tom nor Susan heard.
A fav'rite has no friend!

From hence, ye beauties! undeceived
Know one false step is ne'er retrieved,
And be with caution bold:
Not all that tempts your wand'ring eyes
And heedless hearts, is lawful prize,
Nor all that glisters gold!

The High Tide on the Coast of Lincolnshire

THE HIGH TIDE ON THE COAST
OF LINCOLNSHIRE (1571)

JEAN INGELOW

The old mayor climbed the belfry tower,
The ringers ran, by two by three;
"Pull, if ye never pulled before;
Good ringers, pull your best," quoth he.
"Play uppe, play uppe, O Boston bells!
Play all your changes, all your swells,
Play uppe, 'The Brides of Enderby.' "

Men say it was a stolen tyde—
The Lord that sent it, He knows all;
But in myne ears doth still abide
The message that the bells let fall;
And there was nought of strange, beside
The flight of mews and peewits pied
By millions crouched on the old sea wall.

I sat and spun within the door,
My thread brake off, I raised myne eyes;
The level sun, like ruddy ore,
Lay sinking in the barren skies;
And dark against day's golden death
Shee moved where Lindis wandereth,
My sonne's fair wife, Elizabeth.

"Cusha! Cusha! Cusha!" calling,
Ere the early dews are falling,
Farre away I heard her song.
"Cusha! Cusha!" all along;

The High Tide on the Coast of Lincolnshire

Where the reedy Lindis floweth,
 Floweth, floweth,
From the meads where melick groweth
Faintly came her milking song.

“Cusha! Cusha! Cusha!” calling,
“For the dews will soon be falling;
Leave your meadow grasses mellow,
 Mellow, mellow,
Quit your cowslips, cowslips yellow;
Come uppe, Whitefoot, come uppe, Lightfoot
Quit the stalks of parsley hollow,
 Hollow, hollow,
Come uppe, Jetty, rise and follow
From the clovers lift your head;
Come uppe, Whitefoot, come uppe, Lightfoot
Come uppe, Jetty, rise and follow
Jetty to the milking shed.”

If it be long, ay, long ago,
When I beginne to think how long,
Againe I hear the Lindis flow,
Swift as an arrowe, sharpe and strong;
And all the aire, it seemeth mee,
Bin full of floating bells (sayth shee),
That ring the tune of Enderby.

Alle fresh the level pasture lay,
And not a shadowe mote be seene,
Save where full fyve good miles away
The steeple towered from out the greene;
And lo! the great bell farre and wide
Was heard in all the country side
That Saturday at eventide.

The High Tide on the Coast of Lincolnshire

The swanherds where their sedges are
Moved on in sunset's golden breath,
And shepherde lads I heard afarre,
And my sonne's wife, Elizabeth;
Till floating o'er the grassy sea
Came down that kyndly message free,
The "Brides of Mavis Enderby."

Then some looked uppe into the sky,
And all along where Lindis flows
To where the goodly vessels lie,
And where the lordly steeple shows.
They sayde. "And why should this thing be ?
What danger lowers by land or sea ?
They ring the tune of Enderby !

"For evil news from Mablethorpe,
Of pyrate galleys warping down;
For shippes ashore beyond the scorpe,
They have not spared to wake the towne.
But when the west bin red to see,
And storms be none, and pyrates flee,
Why ring 'The Brides of Enderby'?"

I looked without, and lo ! my sonne
Came riding downe with might and main :
He raised a shout as he drew on,
Till all the welkin rang again,
"Elizabeth ! Elizabeth !"
(A sweeter woman ne'er drew breath
Than my sonne's wife, Elizabeth.)

"The olde sea wall (he cried) is down,
The rising tide comes on apace,

The High Tide on the Coast of Lincolnshire

And boats adrift in yonder towne
Go sailing uppe the market-place.”
He shook as one that looks on death;
“God save you, mother!” straight he sayth;
“Where is my wife, Elizabeth?”

“Good sonne, where Lindis winds away,
With her two bairns I marked her long;
And ere yon bells beganne to play
Afar I heard her milking song.”
He looked across the grassy lea,
To right, to left; “Ho Enderby!”
They rang, “The Brides of Enderby!”

With that he cried and beat his breast;
For lo! along the river’s bed
A mighty eygre reared his crest,
And uppe the Lindis raging sped.
It swept with thunderous noises loud;
Shaped like a curling snow-white cloud,
Or like a demon in a shroud.
And rearing Lindis backward pressed,
Shook all her trembling bankes amaine;
Then madly at the eygre’s breast
Flung uppe her weltering walls again.
Then bankes came down with ruin and rout—
Then beaten foam flew round about—
Then all the mighty floods were out.

So farre, so fast the eygre drove,
The heart had hardly time to beat,
Before a shallow seething wave
Sobbed in the grasses at our feet;
The feet had hardly time to flee

The High Tide on the Coast of Lincolnshire

Before it brake against the knee,
And all the world was in the sea.
Upon the roofe we sat that night,
The noise of bells went sweeping by;
I marked the lofty beacon light
Stream from the church tower, red and high—
A lurid mark and dread to see;
And awesome bells they were to mee,
That in the dark rang “Enderby.”

They rang the sailor lads to guide
From roofe to roofe who fearless rowed;
And I—my sonne was at my side,
And yet the ruddy beacon glowed;
I shall never hear her more
By the reedy Lindis shore,
“Cusha! Cusha! Cusha!” calling,
Ere the early dews be falling;
I shall never hear her song,
“Cusha! Cusha!” all along
Where the sunny Lindis floweth,
Goeth, floweth;
From the meads where melick groweth,
When the water winding down,
Onward floweth to the town.

I shall never see her more
Where the reeds and rushes quiver,
Shiver, quiver;
Stand beside the sobbing river,
Sobbing, throbbing, in its falling
To the sandy lonesome shore;
I shall never hear her calling,
“Leave your meadow grasses mellow,
Mellow, mellow;

The High Tide on the Coast of Lincolnshire

Quit your cowslips, cowslips yellow;
Come uppe, Whiteman, come uppe, Lightfoot;
Quit your pipes of parsley hollow,
Hollow, hollow;
Come uppe, Lightfoot, rise and follow;
Lightfoot, Whiteman,
From your clovers lift your head;
Come uppe, Jetty, follow, follow,
Jetty to the milking shed."
And yet he moaned beneath his breath,
"O come in life, or come in death!
O lost! my love, Elizabeth!"

And didst thou visit him no more?
Thou didst, thou didst, my daughter deare;
The waters laid thee at his doore,
Ere yet the early dawn was clear.
Thy pretty bairns in fast embrace,
The lifted sun shone on thy face,
Downe drifted to thy dwelling-place.
That flow strewed wrecks about the grass,
That ebbe swept out the flocks to sea;
A fatal ebbe and flow, alas!
To manye more than myne and mee;
But each will mourn his own (shee sayth)
And sweeter woman ne'er drew breath
Than my sonne's wife, Elizabeth.

Telling the Bees

TELLING THE BEES

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

Here is the place; right over the hill
Runs the path I took;
You can see the gap in the old wall still,
And the stepping stones in the shallow brook.

There is the house, with the gate red-barred,
And the poplars tall;
And the barn's brown length, and the cattle-yard,
And the white horns tossing above the wall.

There are the beehives ranged in the sun;
And down by the brink
Of the brook are her poor flowers, weed-o'errun,
Pansy and daffodil, rose and pink.

A year has gone, as the tortoise goes,
Heavy and slow;
And the same rose blows, and the same sun glows,
And the same brook sings of a year ago.

There's the same sweet clover-smell in the breeze;
And the June sun warm
Tangles his wings of fire in the trees,
Setting, as then, over Fernside Farm.

I mind me how with a lover's care
From my Sunday coat
I brushed off the burrs, and smoothed my hair,
And cooled at the brook-side my brow and throat.

Since we parted a month had passed,
 To love, a year;
Down through the beeches I looked at last
 On the little red gate and the well-sweep near.

I can see it all now,—the slantwise rain
 Of light through the leaves,
The sundown's blaze on her window-pane,
 The bloom of her roses under the eaves.

Just the same as a month before,
 The house and the trees,
The barn's brown gable, the vine by the door,
 Nothing changed but the hives of bees.

Before them, under the garden wall,
 Forward and back,
Went drearily singing the chore-girl small,
 Draping each hive with a shred of black.

Trembling, I listened; the summer sun
 Had the chill of snow;
For I knew she was telling the bees of one
 Gone on the journey we all must go.

Then I said to myself, "My Mary weeps
 For the dead today;
Haply her blind old grandsire sleeps
 The fret and pain of his age away."

But her dog whined low; on the doorway sill,
 With his cane to his chin,
The old man sat; and the chore-girl still
 Sung to the bees stealing out and in.

Telling the Bees

And the song she was singing ever since
In my ear sounds on:
“Stay at home, pretty bees, fly not hence!
Mistress Mary is dead and gone!”

THE GOOSE

ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON

I knew an old wife lean and poor,
Her rags scarce held together;
There strode a stranger to the door,
And it was windy weather.

He held a goose upon his arm,
He uttered rhyme and reason:
“Here, take the goose, and keep you warm,
It is a stormy season.”

She caught the white goose by the leg,
A goose—’twas no great matter.
The goose let fall a golden egg
With cackle and with clatter.

She dropped the goose, and caught the pelf,
And ran to tell her neighbours,
And blessed herself and cursed herself,
And rested from her labours.

And feeding high, and living soft,
Grew plump and able-bodied,

The Goose

Until the grave churchwarden doffed,
The parson smirked and nodded.

So sitting, served by man and maid,
She felt her heart grow prouder;
But ah! the more the white goose laid
It clacked and cackled louder.

It cluttered here, it chuckled there,
It stirred the old wife's mettle;
She shifted in her elbow-chair,
And hurled the pan and kettle.

“A quinsy choke thy cursed note!”
Then waxed her anger stronger.
“Go, take the goose and wring her throat,
I will not bear it longer.”

Then yelped the cur and yowled the cat,
Ran Gaffer, stumbled Gammer.
The goose flew this way and flew that,
And filled the house with clamour.

As head and heels upon the floor
They floundered all together,
There strode a stranger to the door,
And it was windy weather.

He took the goose upon his arm,
He uttered words of scorning:
“So keep you cold or keep you warm,
It is a stormy morning.”

The wild wind rang from park to plain,
And round the attics rumbled,

The Goose

Till all the tables danced again,
And half the chimneys tumbled.

The glass blew in, the fire blew out,
The blast was hard and harder.
Her cap blew off, her gown blew up,
And a whirlwind cleared the larder;

And while on all sides breaking loose
Her household fled the danger,
Quoth she, "The devil take the goose,
And God forget the stranger!"

THE LEGEND OF RABBI BEN LEVI

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

Rabbi Ben Levi, on the Sabbath, read
A volume of the law, in which it said,
"No man shall look upon my face and live."
And as he read, he prayed that God would give
His faithful servant grace with mortal eye
To look upon His face and yet not die.

There fell a sudden shadow on the page,
And, lifting up his eyes, grown dim with age,
He saw the Angel of Death before him stand,
Holding a naked sword in his right hand.
Rabbi Ben Levi was a righteous man,
Yet through his veins a chill of terror ran.
With trembling voice he said, "What wilt thou here?"
The Angel answered, "Lo! the time draws near

The Legend of Rabbi Ben Levi

When thou must die; yet first, by God's decree,
What e'er thou askest shall be granted thee."

Replied the Rabbi, "Let these living eyes
First look upon my place in Paradise."

Then said the Angel, "Come with me and look."
Rabbi Ben Levi closed the sacred book,
And rising, and uplifting his gray head,
"Give me thy sword," he to the Angel said,
"Lest thou should fall upon me by the way."
The Angel smiled and hastened to obey,
Then led him forth to the Celestial Town,
And set him on the wall, whence gazing down,
Rabbi Ben Levi, with his living eyes,
Might look upon his place in Paradise.

Then straight into the city of the Lord
The Rabbi leaped with the Death-Angel's sword,
And through the streets there swept a sudden breath
Of something there unknown which men call death.
Meanwhile, the Angel stayed without, and cried,
"Come back!" To which the Rabbi's voice replied,
"No! in the name of God whom I adore,
I swear that hence I will depart no more!"

Then all the Angels cried "O Holy One,
See what the son of Levi here hath done!
The kingdom of Heaven he takes by violence,
And in Thy name refuses to go hence!"
The Lord replied, "My Angels, be not wroth;
Did e'er the son of Levi break his oath?
Let him remain; for he with mortal eye
Shall look upon my face and yet not die."

The Legend of Rabbi Ben Levi

Beyond the outer wall the Angel of Death
Heard the great Voice, and said, with panting breath,
"Give back the sword and let me go my way."
Whereat the Rabbi paused, and answered "Nay!
Anguish enough already has it caused
Among the sons of men." And while he paused
He heard the awful mandate of the Lord
Resounding through the air, "Give back the sword!"

The Rabbi bowed his head in silent prayer,
Then said he to the dreadful Angel "Swear
No human eye shall look on it again;
But when thou takest away the souls of men,
Thyself unseen, and with an unseen sword,
Thou wilt perform the bidding of the Lord."
The Angel took the sword again, and swore,
And walks on earth unseen forever more.

LORD RANDAL

ANONYMOUS

O where have you been, Lord Randal, my son?
O where have you been, my handsome young man?"
"I have been to the wild wood; Mother, make my
bed soon,
For I'm weary with hunting, and fain would lie
doon."

"Who gave you your dinner, Lord Randal, my son?
Who gave you your dinner, my handsome young man?"

Lord Randal

“I dined with my sweetheart; Mother, make my bed soon,
For I’m weary with hunting, and fain would lie doon.”

“What had you for dinner, Lord Randal, my son?
What had you for dinner, my handsome young man?”

“I had eels boiled in broth; Mother, make my bed soon,
For I’m weary with hunting, and fain would lie doon.”

“And where are your bloodhounds, Lord Randal, my son?

And where are your bloodhounds, my handsome young man?”

“O they swelled and they died; Mother, make my bed soon,
For I’m weary with hunting, and fain would lie doon.”

O I fear you are poisoned, Lord Randal, my son?

O I fear you are poisoned, my handsome young man!”

“O yes! I am poisoned; Mother, make my bed soon,
For I’m sick at the heart, and I fain would lie doon.”

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Titles of Poems, caps and lower case, roman.

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